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FROM BARBARIANS TO NEW MEN

*Greek, Roman, and Modern Perceptions of
Peoples from the Central Apennines*



EMMA DENCH



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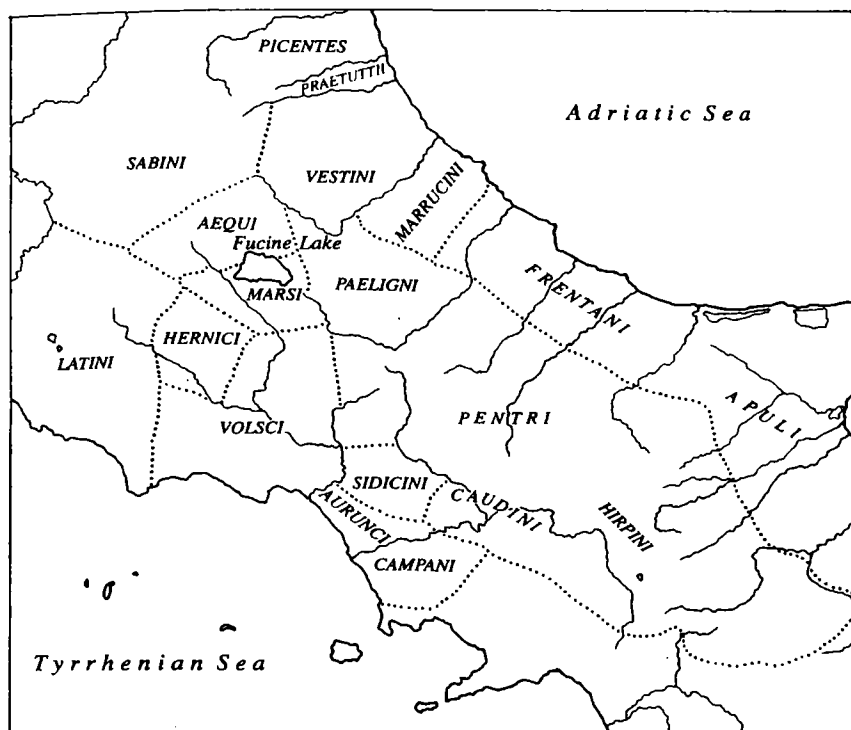
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MAP. The Peoples of Central Italy by the Early Third Century BC (adapted from E. T. Salmon, *Sabinum and the Samnites* (Cambridge, 1967), 25).

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AION</i> (Arch)	<i>Istituto universitario orientale di Napoli, annali del seminario di studi nel mondo classico, sezione di archeologia e storia antica</i>
Alton, Wormell, Courtney	E. Alton, D. Wormell, and E. Courtney (eds.), <i>P. Ovidi Nasonis Fastorum Libri sex</i> (Leipzig, 1988)
<i>AION</i> (Ling)	<i>Istituto universitario orientale di Napoli, annali del seminario di studi nel mondo classico, sezione linguistica</i>
Astbury	R. Astbury (ed.), <i>M. Terentii Varronis Saturarum Menippearum Fragmenta</i> (Leipzig, 1985)
<i>Athen.</i>	<i>Athenaeum</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, London</i>
<i>BMC Italy</i>	<i>A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum, Italy</i> (London, 1873)
<i>Bourgeoisies</i> (1983)	<i>Les Bourgeoisies municipales italiennes</i> (Centre Jean Bérard, Institut français de Naples, 1983)
<i>CAH</i> (2)	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i> 2nd edition
<i>CASVT</i> (1977)	<i>Civiltà arcaica dei Sabini nella Valle del Tevere</i> (3 vols.; Rome)
Chass.	M. Chassignet (ed.), <i>Cato Les Origines (Fragments)</i> (Paris, 1986)
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (Berlin, 1893-)
<i>CP</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>DDA</i>	<i>Dialoghi di archeologia</i>
<i>FGH</i>	F. Jacoby (ed.), <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> (Berlin, 1923-58)
<i>FIRA</i>	S. Riccobono (ed.), <i>Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani</i> (Florence, 1941)
Frazer	J. G. Frazer (ed.), <i>The Fasti of Ovid Edited with a Translation and Commentary</i> (5 vols.; London, 1929)

<i>HIM</i>	P. Zanker (ed.) <i>Hellenismus in Mittellitalien</i> (Göttingen, 1976)
<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Historia</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> (Berlin, 1873–)
<i>ILLRP</i>	A. Degraffi (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i> (Florence, 1957–63)
<i>ILS</i>	H. Dessau (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> (Berlin, 1892–1916)
<i>J</i>	H. D. Jocelyn (ed.), <i>The Tragedies of Ennius: The Fragments Edited with an Introduction and Commentary</i> (Cambridge, 1967)
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>K</i>	C. G. Kühn (ed.), <i>Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia</i> (20 vols.; 1st edn. 1821–33, Leipzig; repr. Hildesheim, 1964–5)
<i>L</i>	W. M. Lindsay (ed.), <i>Sexti Pompei Festi de Verborum Significatu quae Supersunt cum Pauli Epitome</i> (Leipzig, 1913)
Lindsay	W. M. Lindsay (ed.), <i>T. Macci Plauti Comoediae</i> (Oxford, 1903), i
<i>M</i>	F. Marx, <i>Lucilius</i> (Leipzig, 1904)
<i>MEFRA</i>	<i>École française de Rome: mélanges: antiquité</i>
Morel	W. Morel (ed.), <i>Poetae Latini, Fragmenta poetarum Latinarum epicorum et lyricorum praeter Ennium et Lucilium, post W. Morel, novis curis adhibitis</i> , ed. C. Buechner (Leipzig, 1982)
<i>NC</i>	<i>The Numismatic Chronicle</i>
<i>ORF(4)</i>	E. Malcovati (ed.), <i>Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta</i> , 4th edn. (Turin, 1976)
<i>P</i>	H. Peter (ed.), <i>Historicum Romanorum Fragmenta</i> (Leipzig, 1883)
<i>PBSR</i>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<i>PCIA</i>	<i>Popoli e civiltà dell'Italia antica</i>
<i>PCPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>

PDP

La parola del passato

Po.

P. Poccetti, *Nuovi documenti italici* (Pisa, 1979)

PSCS (1985)

Preistoria, storia e civiltà dei Sabini (Rieti)

RAL

Rendiconti della Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche dell'Accademia dei Lincei (Rome)

RDGE

R. Sherk (ed.), *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore, 1969)

RE

A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, *Real Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1894–)

REA

Revue des études anciennes

Rh. M. f. Philol.

Rheinisches Museum für Philologie

Riv. stor. ital.

Rivista storica italiana

Romanisation (1991)

La Romanisation du Samnium aux II^e et I^{er} siècles av. J. -C. (Bibliothèque de l'Institut français de Naples; deuxième série, vol. ix, Naples)

Saepinum (1982)

M. Matteini Chiari (ed.), *Saepinum: museo documentario del'Altilia* (Campobasso)

Sannio (1980)

Sannio: Pentri e Frentani dal VI al I sec a. C. (Rome) Catalogue of Exhibition

Sannio (1984)

Sannio: Pentri e Frentani dal VI al I sec a. C. (Campobasso) Conference Proceedings

Samnium (1991)

Samnium: archeologia del Molise (Rome)

SEG

Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum

SIG(3)

W. Dittenberger (ed.), *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd edn. (Leipzig, 1915–24)

Sk.

O. Skutsch, *The Annals of Q. Ennius edited with introduction and commentary* (Oxford, 1985)

St. Etr.

Studi Etruschi

St. Misc

Studi Miscellanei. Seminario di archeo-

	<i>logia e storia dell'arte greca e romana dell'Università di Roma</i>
Strzelecki	W. Strzelecki (ed.), <i>Cn. Naevii Belli Punici carminis quae supersunt</i> (Leipzig, 1964)
TCPS	<i>Transactions of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
Ve.	E. Vetter, <i>Handbuch der italischen Dialekte</i> (Heidelberg, 1953)
Wehrli(2)	F. Wehrli (ed.), <i>Die Schule des Aristoteles: Texte und Kommentar</i> , 2nd edn., Basle, 1969)
YCS	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>



Introduction

The enduring fascination of images of peoples of the Central Apennines may be seen in Salmon's monograph of 1967, *Samnium and the Samnites*, a work that evokes the character of the Samnites by drawing heavily on images from Horace and Livy. It was not my intention to rewrite Salmon's book: in particular, I have not set out here any comprehensive description of aspects of life in the Central Apennines, drawn together from material and literary evidence. This is partly because the sheer quantity of material evidence available today would render such a task even more ambitious than it was in 1967. More importantly, however, this is because my focus is on images of peoples of the Central Apennines, shifting according to the perspective of the observer.

Of course there were in antiquity no 'peoples of the Central Apennines', in the sense that no peoples called themselves, or were referred to, by this name. As the changing nature of images, definitions, and self-definitions is one of the major themes of this book, it is important to use as a collective name a neutral, geographically descriptive title deliberately free of ethnic overtones, unlike the widely used 'Sabellic', or 'Sabellian', modern terms which are based very precariously on the comparatively late Latin *Sabellus*, a collective for Sabines and Samnites. A map is given of conventionally accepted 'territories' of peoples of the Central Apennines by the early third century BC, but it is not without problems. The modern consensus is that, by the early third century, self-definition along the lines of the various peoples named in Roman sources for the conquest of Italy is stronger than before, but such a map obviously gives a false impression of a fixed and static situation, and cannot possibly represent the periodic heightening of a sense of connection or difference, let alone changes in self-definition.

The 'peoples of the Central Apennines' must also remain a loose definition, as the assertion of connections between various individual peoples varied according to different circumstances, and at other

times self-definition of a people might involve the assertion of connections with another people outside this geographical area. For example, the Sacred Spring myths, which give an account of the origins of, and connections between, various peoples of the Central Apennines, seem to emphasize various connections between Samnites, Sabines, and Picentes.¹ In contrast, a tradition recorded by Strabo asserts, through reference to common Spartan heritage, connections between the Tarentines and the Samnites.² On the other hand, certainly in Roman eyes in the later Republic, the connection between Romans and Sabines was of considerable importance.³ The closest association between geographical proximity and 'group characteristics' is found in writers of the Imperial period. Thus Pliny the Elder, for example, describes as the 'gentes . . . fortissimae Italiae' ('bravest peoples of Italy') the whole of Augustus' Fourth Region: the Frentani, Marrucini, Paeligni, Marsi, Aequi, Vestini, Samnites, and Sabines.⁴

In stressing the shifting nature of groups, as well as the different and complex social and historical factors behind these groups, I seek to challenge the assertion, or, more commonly, the assumption, that historical events such as the Social War can be explained by reference to 'origins': common cultural, or even racial, traits.⁵ These frameworks, which are reminiscent of nineteenth-century racial theory⁶ or Romantic understanding of the origins and nature of nations⁷ do not fit the evidence well. In consequence, while theories of early cultural unity are examined in the last chapter, the main focus of this book is not on evidence for early migrations or cultural unities, but the

¹ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C; 5. 4. 2 = 240 C; cf. Pliny *NH* 3. 110.

² e.g. Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C. ³ Cf. Ch. 2, s. 8 below.

⁴ Pliny *NH* 3. 106.

⁵ e.g. E. T. Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge, 1967), 344.

⁶ Cf. M. Banton, *Racial Theories* (Cambridge, 1987), esp. ch. 2 and 3.

⁷ Cf. e.g. E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983), 48–9, for criticism of explanation of nations in terms of appeal to a remote common past; P. Alter, *Nationalism* (London, 1989), 60 ff., for discussion of the ways in which past political and imperial orders are appealed to as dubious precedents for the existence of present nations; for individual studies of the creation of a common 'original' unifying culture and past to suit the needs of the present, see e.g. H. Trevor-Roper, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), 15 ff.; P. Morgan, 'From a Death to a View: The Hunt for a Welsh Past in the Romantic Period', in the same volume, 43 ff. For early 19th cent. insistence that modern Greece was the direct descendant of classical Hellenism, see R. Just, 'Triumph of the Ethnos', in E. Tonkin *et al.* (eds.), *History and Ethnicity* (London, 1989).

contexts for the assertion of various connections, and the terms in which these connections were expressed.

As this book is about images, it is obviously not a detailed area survey, although it is heavily indebted to existing studies of this kind. It is an attempt to use existing archaeological evidence, as well as accounts written in Greek and Latin, in order to address some of the problems involved in thinking about 'regional' history, and above all the history of peoples who had no literature of their own, or whose literature has not survived. These problems include dealing with different kinds of evidence from different times, relating to different cultures and suggesting different points of view. The issues involved in studying images of peoples of the Central Apennines are suggestive particularly of the intensely culturally interactive conditions of central and southern Italy in antiquity.

Precisely because of the shifting nature of images of peoples of the Central Apennines, I have chosen to concentrate on a period when evidence to assist 'reading' them is comparatively plentiful, and relations between cultures are particularly dynamic. The main focus of this study is Hellenistic Italy from the fourth century BC to the immediate aftermath of the Social War in the early first century BC. This is a period of both intense social, political, and economic change, and intense cultural interaction, which may be illustrated by two very different examples. One is to be found in the comparatively abundant and well-known material record of Samnium in particular, reflecting and asserting membership of the Hellenistic cultural *koiné*, but expressive also of concepts of social organization quite different from the urban ideal of the Hellenistic world in general. Another of the most interesting aspects of this period is the evidence for Roman self-definition in terms of her relationship with the other peoples of Italy. Through her domination of Italy, and the associated assertion of her own centrality within Italy, Rome came to have a particularly close relationship with peoples of the Central Apennines, as with other Italian peoples, defined, revealed, and reflected in her literature and ideology. Roman self-definition draws on ideological languages of power and relationships between peoples associated with fifth-century Athens or fourth-century southern Italy, but the process of selection, the manner of redeployment of images, and the adaptation of images all suggest shifting culturally specific priorities within different social and political contexts.

1. DISCOVERING THE CENTRAL APENNINES

This present study is much indebted to the work done by archaeologists in recent years in the modern Italian regions of Abruzzo and Molise. The story of the development of interest in the Central Apennines in the modern period is at times in itself a highly suggestive example of the way in which images are created and propagated.

Interest in the material culture of non-Roman peoples has a long history, and has not infrequently been connected with contemporary quests for non-Roman Italian identity: Etruscan material culture, for example, was a particular focus of interest in the eighteenth century, as the quality and antiquity of artefacts gratified local feelings of patriotism. Study of the ancient material culture of the Central Apennines in particular, apart from sporadic interest in localizing sites known from ancient authors, was a comparatively late development. While De Nino, a local enthusiast from Pratola Peligna near Sulmona, tirelessly recorded ancient material evidence from the Central Apennines in the later nineteenth century, systematic archaeological research in the Central Apennines really belongs to the period after the Second World War.⁸

An important turning-point in the study of the Central Apennines was undoubtedly Salmon's publication in 1967 of *Samnium and the*

⁸ e.g. A. Momigliano, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 13 (1950), 285 ff., for 18th-cent. interest in pre-Roman peoples, and in Etruscans in particular, reflecting the contemporary need in Italy to find and emphasize non-Roman identities. Regarding the Abruzzi in particular, see F. Van Woutherghem, *Superaequum, Corfinium, Sulmo: Forma Italiae*, iv/1 (Florence, 1984), 13 ff., for humanist interest in localising sites in the Central Apennines; A. La Regina, introd. to V. Cianfarani, *Culture adriatiche antiche d'Abruzzo e di Molise*; (Rome, 1978), i for the large-scale archaeological neglect of this area until comparatively recently.

A. De Nino, *Abruzzi: usi e costumi abruzzesi* (Florence, 1883), iii suggested that the collection of evidence of ancient local material culture, and of contemporary popular culture, in his opinion neglected topics of study, were together vitally important for a 'true history' of the Italian people which would be of profound political importance in the future. He does not, however, explain in any detail the results that would be expected from a study such as his: e.g. De Nino, *Abruzzi* (1879), vol. i pp. viii-ix: 'È solo co' nuovi materiali raccolti e col dare maggiore importanza ai materiali antichi, già scartati appunto perchè non si referivano a mutamenti politici, potrà comporsi una storia vera, la vera storia del popolo italiano che conduca a fare giusti calcoli rispetto al futuro.' ('It is only by the collecting together of new evidence, and by the accordance of greater importance to ancient evidence, once cast aside because it was not relevant to political changes, that it will be possible to write a true history, the true history of the Italian people, which will lead to making the right decisions about the future.')

Samnites. Salmon brought together literary, epigraphic and archaeological material in a work which remains very important and influential today for the study of the Central Apennines. Even in 1968, however, Martin Frederiksen expressed doubts about Salmon's interpretation of the material available to him. Two major criticisms stand out. One is his overemphasis on the conflict between Rome and the Samnites: Salmon is inclined to see the destructive force of Rome at hand everywhere, hell-bent on the elimination of these admirable simple peasants, and is reluctant to propose alternative explanations for social and cultural change.⁹ The other problem with the work is that Greek influence on Samnite culture is constantly underestimated.¹⁰ This problem cannot be put down entirely to the date of publication, and indeed Salmon has photographs of the impressive late second-/early first-century BC theatre-temple B at Pietrabbondante, highlighting its Hellenistic features,¹¹ as well as an interesting discussion of early Greek influences within his chapter on Samnite culture. However, no attempt is made to integrate this material properly with Salmon's assumptions about the Samnite 'character', which emerge frequently in his discussion.¹² His Samnites are ultimately an uneasy mixture of the pre-civilized *montani atque agrestes* ('uncouth mountain-men'), one striking image within Livy's account of the Samnite Wars, and the worthy 'Sabellian' peasant-farmers of Horace *Odes* 3. 6.¹³

Without doubt, the profile of the Central Apennines changed radically in the course of the 1970s and 1980s, as new finds and studies challenged conventional assumptions about the cultural isolation and rusticity of this area in antiquity. These decades witnessed growing

⁹ M. W. Frederiksen, *JRS* 58 (1968), 228; cf. 224: 'Professor Salmon has almost changed into a Samnite himself. His heart clearly warms to the majestic landscape of the Apennines, and when he turns to write of the long struggle between Samnium and Rome, he becomes frankly and engagingly partisan.'

¹⁰ Ibid. 227: 'the Samnites were neighbours of the Greeks as well as the Romans.'

¹¹ Salmon, *Samnium*, plates 6-8a.

¹² e.g. ibid. 18: 'Samnium was a rugged nurse of rugged men'; 30: 'this latter story [the Tarentine 'invention' of Pitanate ancestry for the Samnites] . . . arose partly from the resemblance of their rough and warlike manner of living to that of the Spartans'; 53: 'The average Samnite may not have been a slave, but he lived a life of toil and hardship, no doubt as the retainer of a local dynast. His rough and ready life had few comforts and no high cultural tradition.'

¹³ Ibid. 65-6: 'They were a peasant people, *montani atque agrestes*, living a hard and frugal existence: *rusticorum mascula militum/proles Sabellis docta ligonibus/versare glebas*.' The first tag is a quote from Livy 9. 13. 7, and the second from Horace *Odes* 3. 6.

interest in using in an increasingly sophisticated fashion material evidence—archaeological and epigraphic—for the reconstruction of local society, and Roman literature figured less prominently in the scholarship of this era. Studies of individual tribes and settlements were produced, following in the train of La Regina's epigraphic and archaeological study of the Vestini.¹⁴ The most notable of these are those of Letta on the Marsi¹⁵ and Van Wouterghem on the cult of Hercules amongst the Paeligni.¹⁶ Broader studies of local society included those of La Regina on settlement types and patterns in the 'Sabellic' area,¹⁷ highlighting local alternatives to urban settlement. Meanwhile, great advances were made by Prosdocimi¹⁸ and Poccetti¹⁹ in the study of early 'Italic' and Oscan documents, used to reconstruct ancient institutions and mentalities: philology became, in the hands of scholars such as these, a vital and valuable source for social history.

However, no part of the Central Apennines received as much attention as upland Molise during these decades. Several very important individual projects challenged the validity of using Roman literature such as the passages of Livy and Horace cited above as a starting-point for the reconstruction of Samnite society. In particular, the *Hellenismus in Mittelitalien* project focused attention fully on cultural interaction in Italy as represented by art and architecture not just in Rome and Tyrrhenian Italy, but also in geographically remoter areas of Italy such as Samnium.²⁰ The highly influential contributions of La Regina²¹ and Morel²² to this project consisted of studies of the rural sanctuaries that flourished in the territory of the

¹⁴ A. La Regina, 'Ricerche sugli insediamenti vestini', *Memorie dei Lincei*, 13/5, (1968), 361 ff.

¹⁵ C. Letta, *I Marsi e il Fucino nell'antichità* (Milan, 1972).

¹⁶ F. Van Wouterghem, 'Le Culte d'Hercule chez les Paeligni: documents anciens et nouveaux', *L'Antiquité classique*, 42 (1973), 36 ff.

¹⁷ A. La Regina, 'Note sulla formazione dei centri urbani in area sabellica', in *Atti del convegno di studi sulla città etrusca e italica preromana* (Bologna, 1970), 191 ff.; id., 'I territori sabellici e sannitici', *DDA* 4-5, 1970-1, 443 ff.

¹⁸ A. Prosdocimi, 'Il lessico istituzionale italico: tra linguistica e storia', in *La cultura italica* (Pisa, 1978), 29 ff.; id., 'La lingua tra storia e cultura', in *Sannio* (1984), 59 ff.; id., 'I safini delle iscrizioni sudpicene', in *PSCS* (1985), 35 ff.; id., 'Sabinità e (pan)italicità linguistica', in *DDA* 3rd ser., 5 (1987), 53 ff.

¹⁹ P. Poccetti, *Nuovi documenti italici* (Pisa, 1979); id., 'Riflessi di strutture di fortificazioni nell'epigrafia italica tra il II ed il I secolo a.C.', *Athen.* ns 66 (1988), 303 ff.

²⁰ P. Zanker (ed.), *HIM* (Göttingen, 1976).

²¹ A. La Regina, 'Il Sannio', *HIM* (1976), 219 ff.

²² J.-P. Morel, 'Le Sanctuaire de Vastogirardi et les influences hellénistiques en Italie centrale', *HIM* (1976), 259 ff..

Pentri, particularly in the course of the second to early first centuries BC. Both scholars made important suggestions about the artistic relationship between these sanctuaries and Campania and the eastern Mediterranean. They also drew attention to the presence and activities of a recognizable élite, whose names recur as magistrates in the building-inscriptions. Questions were raised about the economy of the Central Apennines, and, in particular, about how the building projects were financed: La Regina suggested trade with the Eastern Mediterranean as a possible source for financing the projects and as one of the means by which the architecture of the Pentrian sanctuaries might have been so strongly influenced by Hellenistic models.²³ The importance now attributed to the material culture of the Central Apennines, as well as its sheer visual impact, may be illustrated by the two-volume work of 1978, *Culture adriatiche antiche d'Abruzzo e di Molise*, of which one large volume was a catalogue of material evidence. This work was followed by an exhibition *Sannio: Pentri e Frentani dal VI al I sec. a.C.* held in Isernia in 1980, with a companion volume of conference articles on the theme. Finally, the most recent exhibition, *Samnium: archeologia del Molise*, began its tour in Milano in 1991,²⁴ neatly illustrating the increasing appeal of Samnite culture for audiences outside Abruzzo and Molise.

The 1970s too saw the first results of the Biferno Valley survey, led by Graeme Barker, then director of the British School at Rome. This surface survey took in a large area of Molise, and incorporated a variety of different landscapes, from the lowland coastal area near Larinum to the territory of the Pentri in the high Apennines. This study was important not least for the information it yielded about a more 'everyday' aspect of Molise in antiquity, outside the monumental rural sanctuaries of the late third to second centuries BC, and infrequent settlements with urban features in the pre-Roman period, such as Monte Vairano and Saepinum. Instead of the flimsy, temporary housing for shepherds which Salmon imagined the 'typical' Samnite would have inhabited, Barker's team found evidence of considerably sturdier structures: houses made out of stone, with tiled roofs. Material remains were found for the most part on the slopes of the valley, and this position, coupled with analysis of animal and

²³ La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 229.

²⁴ L. Franchi dell'Orto and A. La Regina, *Culture adriatiche antiche d'Abruzzo e di Molise* (Rome, 1978) ii; Cianfarani, *Culture adriatiche*; Sannio (1980), cf. Sannio (1984); *Samnium* (1991).

vegetal remains suggested that, even in the higher parts of the valley, mixed farming was widely practised.²⁵

Such studies have usefully challenged traditional assumptions about the backwardness and simplicity of the Central Apennines in antiquity, and encouraged greater methodological sophistication. The dramatic 'discovery' of Molise particularly in the 1970s and 1980s owes not a little to the prolific work of the archaeological Soprintendenti of the Regione at this time: Cianfarani, D'Agostino, and above all La Regina. It is, however, worth setting this 'discovery' in its broader historical context. During the 1950s and 1960s, the image of the poverty and backwardness of the area in antiquity, dominant in such works as *Samnium and the Samnites*, was encouraged by its modern aspect. For *historical* rather than simple environmental reasons, the Central Apennines was a poor and dependent area of Italy, in recent times increasingly depopulated as local people went to find greater prosperity in Switzerland, Germany, and America. In studies of local society written in the 1950s and 1960s, reconstructions of the ancient aspect tended to mirror contemporary poverty and marginality.²⁶ In 1971, soon after Molise was formally made an autonomous Regione, it gained its own archaeological Soprintendenza. The challenging new images of Molise, and particularly of 'Pentria', as upland Molise was to be called locally, served to encourage Molise's new identity. The history of the Samnites, particularly before the Social War, was characterized by images of local pride, prosperity, autonomy, and above all unity. Molise's fractured and dependent past could thus be demonstrated to be historically rather than environmentally determined.

Although the studies of the 1970s and 1980s challenged traditional views of the material culture of the Central Apennines, some scholars were careful nevertheless to emphasize the distinctive qualities of

²⁵ G. Barker, J. A. Lloyd, D. Webley, 'A Classical Landscape in Molise', *PBSR* 46 (1978), 35 ff.; G. Barker, 'The Archaeology of Samnite Settlement in Molise', *Antiquity*, 51 (1977), 20 ff.; J. A. Lloyd and G. Barker, 'Rural Settlement in Roman Molise: Problems of Archaeological Survey', *British Archaeological Reports*, International Series 102 (Oxford, 1981), 289 ff.; J. A. Lloyd and D. W. Rathbone, 'A Classical Landscape in Molise', *Conoscenza*, 1 (1984), 216 ff.; J. A. Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands: Samnium and Arcadia in the Hellenistic and Early Roman Imperial Periods', in G. Barker and J. A. Lloyd (eds.), *Roman Landscapes* (London, 1991), 180 ff.

²⁶ R. Mainardi, 'Autonomia amministrativa e disgregazione rurale', in S. Gattei *et al.* (eds.), *Molise* (Milan, 1980), 5 ff.; S. Gattei, 'Una regione piccola e di poche risorse', in the same volume, 11 ff.; S. Pirovano, 'In margine alla vita del meridione', in the same volume, 17 ff.

society in the Central Apennines. For example, in his study of Pentrian sanctuaries, La Regina highlighted an important regional feature of Samnium as opposed to Tyrrhenian Italy: centres with a civil and military function in Samnium received nothing like the kind of attention lavished on the sanctuaries in the late third to early first centuries BC.²⁷ It is important to insist on the recognition of distinct regional features. Problems occur when very real regional differences are overlooked, and models which may be suitable for reconstructing society in Tyrrhenian Italy are applied to reconstructions of society in the Central Apennines. The most successful recent accounts of this area in antiquity acknowledge the existence of features such as monumental sanctuaries, urban structures, and recognizable élites, but continue to retain a sense of perspective by using comparative evidence from other parts of Italy. Thus Lloyd writes of the 'home-spun' character of much of Samnite material culture,²⁸ while Patterson shows how comparatively late was the arrival in the area of features associated with a 'Romanized' good-life, such as aqueducts and bath-buildings, and Morel emphasizes the economic and cultural marginality of Samnium.²⁹ The distinctive character of local society is not obscured, although I will try in Chapter 3 to suggest that Samnite difference from models of society in Tyrrhenian Italy has a less negative aspect.

While great advances have thus been made in the interpretation and discussion of the material culture of the Central Apennines, discussions of the correspondence—or lack of correspondence—between Greek and Roman literary accounts of local society, on the one hand, and material culture, on the other, are not always as sophisticated. One example of this is the not infrequent use of a notorious passage of Livy (9. 13. 7) as a preface to work on Samnite material culture:

nam Samnites, ea tempestate in montibus vicatim habitantes, campestris et maritima loca contempto cultorum molliore atque, ut evenit fere, locis simili genere ipsi montani atque agrestes depopulabantur.

For the Samnites, at that time living in villages in the mountains, used to raid the regions of the plain and coast, despising the softer character of their

²⁷ La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 229.

²⁸ Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 184.

²⁹ J. Patterson, 'Settlement, City and Élite in Samnium and Lycia', in J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *City and Country in the Ancient World* (London, 1991), 146 ff.; J.-P. Morel, *Romanisation* (1991), 187 ff.

cultivators, which, as often happens, was like their country, the Samnites themselves being uncouth mountain-men.

The question that is then asked is whether Livy is right or wrong when he talks about the Samnites as *montani atque agrestes*. This question is clearly simplistic, and it is important to recognize that the subject of 'ways of seeing' in ancient literature is too complex to be approached in this way. Such citations need rather to be considered within their immediate literary and social contexts, within a long tradition both of history-writing and of developing ways of considering and framing information about 'other peoples' in antiquity, and within the context of relations between the Samnites and the cultures within which these traditions have developed—Greek and Roman. All these factors will play a part in the depiction of the Samnites as *montani atque agrestes*.

2. GREEKS, ROMANS, AND PEOPLES OF THE CENTRAL APENNINES

Portrayals of peoples of the Central Apennines that we read in Cato, or Livy, or Strabo, represent highly developed 'ways of seeing' that must be considered as culturally specific selection and embellishment of details within the context of ancient ethnographical traditions. While, in antiquity, the world was 'mapped' as a reflection of the preoccupations of the society considering it, the kinds of relationships experienced with 'other peoples' are closely bound up with the images made of them, relationships having an effect on images, and images having an effect on relationships. The importance that relationships play in the process of image-making is emphasized in Chapter 1, 'Greek contexts', and in Chapter 2, 'Roman Contexts', but a brief summary of the different kinds of relationships that are reflected in ancient literature is given here.

Thinking first of images of Italian peoples in Greek literature, the earliest examples of localization of myth in Italy, visible already in Hesiod's location in the west of Odysseus' adventures, and achieving a more precise form in the apparently sixth century Hesiodic account of the children of Odysseus and Circe, Latinos and Agrios 'kings of the Tyrrhenians', seem to seek to link recent experiences of travel and colonization in the west into the familiar framework of wanderings

after the Trojan War.³⁰ Not surprisingly, interest at this early stage is focused most particularly on peoples closest to the Greek settlements on the coasts, rather than on the remoter mountainous regions inland.

The impulse to localize myth with some precision continues well into the Hellenistic world, and is a feature not only of both east and west Greek writing, but also of 'barbarian' accounts of themselves. Mythological stories that we are used to thinking of as 'Greek' seem in fact to be a 'language' shared between different cultures in ancient Italy from very early times, and serving numerous different purposes. This subject has been greatly illuminated by recent close studies of the iconography of Tyrrhenian Italy in particular, which challenge assumptions that only the Greek version is the 'correct' one, 'native' versions being poor misunderstandings. While some early uses of myth seem to tell a story from the angle of one culture in particular, others dramatize shared input. One of the most interesting examples of this dramatization of shared input occurs in a story told in a fragment of the fifth-century writer Hellanicus of Lesbos. This is a version of the naming of Italy, in which Herakles chases his bull-calf across the Strait, and Italy becomes the name for all the land travelled by the bull-calf, after *ouitoulos*, the 'native' name for this animal, spoken again and again by the local people with whom Herakles comes in contact in the course of his search.³¹ Early myth-making seems to reflect close cultural interaction achieved by a variety of means in the early history of the Greek colonies: for example, through exchange of goods, close proximity of settlement, marriage, or, indeed, through conflict.

By the fifth to fourth centuries, the Greek/barbarian polarity, strengthened through conflict with and victory over Persia, is a major frame of reference for depicting relationships with 'other peoples'. Conflict and pressure in the west is set in these terms: Sicilian victory over the Carthaginians is synchronized with victory over the Persians at Salamis,³² while the perceived increased pressure of Oscan-speaking peoples on the Greek cities is depicted in terms of the discourse of the barbarian.³³ This polarity does not, of course, function as a barrier between a permanent set of Greeks on one side and 'barbarians' on

³⁰ Hesiod F150, 25 ff; 390; cf. Strabo 1. 2. 14 = 23 C. For the dating of the Hesiodic reference at *Works and Days* 1011–16 to the children of Odysseus and Circe, see M. L. West (ed.), *Hesiod, Theogony* (Oxford, 1966), 433 ff.

³¹ D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 35 = Hellanicus *FGH* 4, F 111.

³² Herod. 7. 166.

³³ Cf. Ch. 1, s. 2 (b) below.

the other. As the terms in which the polarity is defined are cultural, rather than somatic, it is possible for barbarians to become accepted as Greeks, and this in fact happens in the case of the southern Italian town of Petelia in the course of the second century bc.³⁴ The more common alternative, once a sense of the desirability of Greek culture has been established, is to continue to 'buy into' it. For the peoples of Italy, reference is made to Greek culture as the 'language' of prestige and models of élite behaviour, but using this 'language' by no means necessarily means *becoming* Greek. One of the most vivid examples of this phenomenon is to be found in southern Italian paintings in which clear iconographical allusions are made to schemes of Greeks versus barbarians. In these cases, however, those who have taken up the roles of the Greeks are depicted in the clothing of Italian warriors. Their enemies are similarly clearly to be identified by their distinctive clothing: they are not always 'barbarian' figures familiar from Greek iconography, but may be other Italians, or even Greeks.³⁵

A contrasting aspect of the ideology of the Greek cities of southern Italy in the fifth to fourth centuries bc relates to the self-definition of individual cities, and to associated conflict between Greek cities. Such ideology may reflect more acutely the need for close relationships with Italian peoples, and forms a frame of reference within which this may be understood. When conflicts arise between Greek cities, Italian peoples may become very much more useful, particularly in terms of the need to entertain friendly relations with neighbouring peoples, and in terms of manpower. A major example of ideological development of this kind is the Tarentine post-Pythagorean discourse surrounding the figure of Archytas.³⁶ Within Tarentine post-Pythagorean discourse, images of Sparta are very important, and the austerity associated with these images is contrasted with the *tryphé* ('decadence') of states like Syracuse. One important aspect of this ideological development is an 'outward-looking' attitude, whereby Italian peoples are represented as participating in Tarentine Pythagoreanism. Thus, for example, there are various traditions of individual Italians

³⁴ F. Costabile, *Istituzioni e forme costituzionali nelle città del Bruzio in età romana* (Naples, 1984), 67; G. Manganaro, 'Città di Sicilia e santuari panellenici nel III e II sec. a.C.', *Hist.* 13 (1964), 414 ff., 419 ff.; *IG* xiv. 637.

³⁵ Cf. A. Rouveret, A. Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria in Lucania e Campania: puntualizzazioni cronologiche e proposte di lettura', in *Ricerche di pittura ellenistica: lettura e interpretazione della produzione pittorica dal IV secolo a.C. all'ellenismo*, *Quaderni dei dialoghi di archeologia* 1 (Rome, 1985), 120-1, and Ch. 1 s. 4 below.

³⁶ Cf. Ch. 1, s. 3 below.

associated with Pythagorean leaders, and also becoming Pythagorean leaders themselves. They are also attributed Spartan *nomoi* ('customs'), thereby demonstrating their 'family' relationship with the Tarentines. Once again, however, while Italian Pythagoreanism is serving a whole complex of functions within the context of Tarentine ideology, it can be argued through the study of ancient literature and iconography that Italian Pythagoreanism was very much a two-way affair: a feature of Italian self-definition, just as it was a feature of Tarentine self-definition.

Turning now to Rome, when hints of contemporary ideology become comparatively clear towards the end of the fourth century BC, the terms in which she portrays the 'conquest of Italy' are very much what we would expect of any of the 'Hellenized' powers of central or southern Italy. Thus, as I shall argue more fully in Chapters 1 and 2, Rome depicts her wars with Italians in the late fourth and early third centuries BC in terms of the imagery of Athenian and Macedonian imperialism, as well as in terms of imagery associated with Italian Pythagoreanism, the ideological 'language' specific to the cultural conditions of central and southern Italy. It is important to preface any account of the 'conquest of Italy' with these statements: the peculiarly comprehensive nature of the Roman conquest, and the distinctive form it took, in terms of the establishment of a network of different relationships centred on herself and later set out in the form of juridical definitions, and her persistent use of the manpower of the conquered peoples of Italy, foreshadowing their ultimate incorporation within her citizen body, is something which seems only to have begun to have been reflected within Roman Italian ideology from around the mid- to later third century BC.

The distinctive character of the conquest and its aims were, then, perhaps rather more clearly visible in retrospect. Nevertheless, as the extent and nature of Roman conquest of the peoples of the Central Apennines are highly relevant to discussions of their place within Roman ideology, it is necessary here to give a brief account of conquest and settlement in the Central Apennines following the traditional chronology based on Roman narrative sources and the *Fasti Triumphales*.³⁷ All ethnic names are given as used by ancient authors.

³⁷ The account given here follows closely T. J. Cornell, 'The Conquest of Italy', *CAH*(2) vii/2 (Cambridge, 1989), 351 ff., and E. S. Staveley, 'Rome and Italy in the early third century', in the same volume, 420 ff. Sources for events after 293 are given in M. R. Torelli, *Rerum Romanarum Fontes* (Pisa, 1978).

The Samnites' first entry into Roman history happens quietly in Livy's account when, in 354, they made a treaty with Rome, impressed with her recent successes against Tarquinii and Tibur.³⁸ His account of the First Samnite War, the historicity of which is open to debate, is set within a more grandiose framework, and finds Romans and Samnites competing in 343 for influence between the Middle Liris and Volturnus Valleys. The Samnites apparently attacked the Sidicini, who sought aid amongst the Campani. When the Samnites shifted their focus towards Tifata, above Capua, the Campanians were accepted by Rome into a relationship of *deditio*: thus, traditionally, Romans and Samnites first found themselves at war.³⁹

The traditional account places great emphasis on the 'Latin settlement' of 338, which certainly in retrospect seemed to be an important turning-point in the history of Roman expansion. In 328, the foundation of the Latin colony of Fregellae was interpreted as an act of aggression against the Samnites.⁴⁰ Thus, quite plausibly, the Second Samnite War began, the Samnite Wars involving in their course most prominently the Caudini, Hirpini, Pentri, and Caraceni.⁴¹ While a narrative is given of the Samnite Wars in Livy, precise reconstruction of campaigns is much impaired both by difficulties in identifying sites mentioned, and by Livy's occasional topographical vagueness.⁴² As Livy also writes predominantly from a Roman point of view, and within a scheme whereby the Roman conquest is coherent and inevitable, it is extremely difficult to trace with any certainty a perspective on events from the point of view of other Italian peoples. Fortunately, a precise narrative is not really relevant here: what is far more important in providing a context within which to understand Roman ideology of the later third to second centuries in particular is to give an account of individual 'settlements' on the part of Rome. Events after 250 bc are not treated here, as they are considered in detail in the course of Chapters 2 and 5.

By 312, pressure on the Samnites was considerable, and this was to increase over the next few years: to the west, the peoples of Campania were now largely 'settled' by Rome, the most recent development being the creation in 318 of two new tribes to contain new Roman

³⁸ Livy 7. 19.

³⁹ Ibid. 29–31.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 8. 23. 6.

⁴¹ Cf. Ch. 5, s. 5 below.

⁴² For suggestions about the localization of Samnite hill-forts mentioned in Livy, see Cornell, 'The Conquest of Italy', 358–9.

citizens from Campania.⁴³ To the south, Roman campaigns in Apulia and Lucania had ended in treaties of alliance with the Samnites' powerful neighbours, Arpi, Teanum Apulum, Canusium, Forentum, and Nerulum. The Latin colony of Luceria had been sent out to northern Apulia in 314.⁴⁴ The Romans' subsequent campaigns concerned peoples to the north of the Samnites: in 304, the Aequi were attacked, with severe consequences, and after this campaign, the Samnites' neighbours to the north and east, the Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, and Frentani, concluded permanent treaties of alliance with Rome, followed in 302 by the Vestini. The Latin colonies of Sora, Alba Fucens, and Carseoli were sent out in the wake of these treaties.⁴⁵

It was in the aftermath of the battle of Sentinum in 295 that the Romans encroached most heavily on the territory of the Samnites, by sending out the colony of Venusia in 291, and annexing a large portion of land in the vicinity. The Samnites surrendered in 290.⁴⁶ During this year, Manius Curius Dentatus campaigned against the Sabines and Praetuttii, apparently boasting in the senate of the huge number of men conquered and the vast extent of land seized. The Sabines and Praetuttii were incorporated as *cives sine suffragio*, their land becoming effectively *ager Romanus*, a considerable proportion of it being occupied by Roman settlers.⁴⁷ With the addition of the territory of the Picentes excepting the territory of Asculum, in a particularly poorly documented campaign, Roman territory now stretched all the way to the Adriatic coast at this point, conquest being consolidated by the foundation of the colony of Hadria on the coast, in the early 290s.⁴⁸ On the chronology most widely accepted by modern scholars, the so-called 'lowland' Sabines of the territories nearest Rome were granted the full Roman citizenship in 268, while the so-called 'upland' Sabines were enfranchised in 241.⁴⁹

⁴³ Livy 9. 20. 5–6.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 7–10.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 9. 45. 17–18; Diod. 20. 101. 5; Livy 10. 3. 1.

⁴⁶ For Venusia, see D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 17–18. 5. 2; Hor. *Sat.* 2. 1. 34–9; V.P. 1. 14. 6. For the Romans' final victory over the Samnites, see Cic. *Sen.* 55; Cic. *Pis.* 58; Livy *Per.* 11; Val. Max. 4. 3. 5.

⁴⁷ For the conquest of the Sabines, see e.g. Dio fr. 37. 1; Auct. *Vir. Ill.* 33. 1–3; for virginate allotment of their land, see e.g. Val. Max. 4. 3. 5.

⁴⁸ Cornell, 'The Conquest of Italy', 380–1; Staveley, 'Rome and Italy', 425 ff.

⁴⁹ The enfranchisement of 'lowland' Sabines alone in 268, upland Sabines being enfranchised in 241, is upheld in A. Afzelius, *Die römische Eroberung Italiens* (Copenhagen, 1942), 21 ff., L. R. Taylor, *The Voting Districts of the Roman Republic: The*

After the defeat of Pyrrhus, the appearance of 'Samnite' territory was made to assume the form it retained until the Social War. The Romans founded the Latin colonies of Beneventum in 268 and Aesernia in 263, decisively driving wedges between the Pentri, Hirpini, and Caudini. Furthermore, they annexed a sizeable portion of land to the north of the Samnite areas, with the effect that a band of Roman territory now lay between the 'Samnites' and the Marsi and Paeligni.⁵⁰

These consequences of the conquest of Italy came to be highly relevant to distinctive developments in Roman ideology, besides having lasting effects on local self-definition. Within the earliest visible Roman ideology of conquest, which, I would argue, dates to around 300 BC, Sabines and Samnites are set within the familiar framework of barbarian peoples. The peculiar character of Roman conquest—the establishment of a network of different relationships centred on Rome, physical changes to local landscapes, the moving about of peoples within peninsular Italy, in voluntary and forced schemes, and above all the incorporation of manpower and, later, citizens—is reflected much more clearly in images of Italy and Italians of the second century BC onwards. To an important extent, the *Origines* of Cato seem representative of distinctively Roman ideology, particularly with regard to the treatment of Italy as, in some sense, a collective entity, the foundation stories, geographical habitats, and *nomoi* of Italian peoples prefaced by the foundation of Rome, and concluded with the contemporary history that is to some extent the common history of Italy and Rome.⁵¹ A perhaps more explicit example is to be found in the 'ideology of incorporation' first applied to the Sabines, and, for that matter, to the Sabine territory, and discussed extensively in Chapter 2. Sabines and Sabine territory function as alternatives to Rome, but they are desirable rather

Thirty-Five Urban and Rural Tribes (Rome, 1960), 459 ff., A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* (Oxford, 1973), 51, but disputed by P. A. Brunt, 'The Enfranchisement of the Sabines', in J. Bibauw (ed.) *Hommages à M. Renard* (3 vols. Brussels, 1969), ii. 121 ff., who considers that all Sabines were enfranchised in 268.

⁵⁰ Staveley, 'Rome and Italy', 422.

⁵¹ See e.g. M. H. Crawford, 'Origini e sviluppi del sistema provinciale romano', in *Storia di Roma ii: L'impero mediterraneo: I, la repubblica imperiale* (Turin, 1990), 95, for Roman ideas of what Italy was, and was not, by the end of the third century BC; N. Purcell, 'The Creation of Provincial Landscape: The Roman Impact on Cisalpine Gaul', in T. Blagg and M. Millett (eds.), *The Early Roman Empire in the West* (Oxford, 1990), 7 ff. for Roman action in Cisalpine Gaul as a reflection of a peculiarly Roman conceptualization of conquered land and peoples.

than dangerous alternatives, with overtones of moral uprightness rather than of barbarian primitivism.

3. 'WAYS OF SEEING' IN ANTIQUITY

In order to illustrate the value of examining closely ancient literary sources which depict 'other peoples' in Italy, I have chosen the very different examples of Cato's *Origines*, written in the early second century BC, and Livy's narrative of the Samnite Wars, written in the early Augustan period.⁵² In both cases, I shall point out some of the 'ways of seeing' that are distinctive in ancient writers, and suggest some of the ways in which the study of each author individually is valuable as well as being complex.

Cato's *Origines* have not always received the attention they deserve in studies of the tradition of geographical and ethnographical writing in antiquity, where they so clearly and self-consciously belong. The title itself surely alludes to the Greek tradition of detailing *ktiseis*, foundation stories, an important strand of ancient 'travel-literature', whereby the world was mapped out with particular reference to the wanderings of mythological heroes.⁵³ Remarkably, while Cato's first book deals with foundation stories of Rome, his next two books are concerned with origins, geography, and ethnography of peninsular Italy. The last four books deal with near-contemporary and contemporary events, culminating in substantial examples of the speeches of Cato himself.

The layout and bare contents of the *Origines* are already suggestive. While the space devoted to foundation stories of Rome is substantial, the degree of emphasis on other Italian peoples is unparalleled in contemporary literature. The fragmentary nature of the *Origines* has encouraged numerous interpretations of Cato's purpose and preoccupations, some of which are more convincing than others. Questions of Cato's purpose and preoccupations are complicated by later glosses of the work as a whole, which seem to draw Cato into ways of seeing Italy and Italians that have far more to do with the social, political,

⁵² For a balanced discussion of Livy's relationship to the Augustan principate, see P. Walsh, *Livy: His Historical Aims and Methods* (Cambridge, 1961), ch. 1.

⁵³ For discussions of Cato's purpose in writing the *Origines*, see e.g. A. Astin, *Cato the Censor* (Oxford, 1978), 211 ff., Crawford, 'Origini e sviluppi del sistema provinciale romano', 96, E. Badian, 'The Early Historians', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Historians* (London, 1966), 1 ff.

and ideological conditions of the late Republic and early Empire than with those of the early second century BC. Certain modern interpretations of Cato's work seem to be based too heavily on glosses such as these, and the particular qualities of Cato's outlook seem lost. For example, Cato has been imagined to privilege 'indigenous' accounts of Italian origins, and to be concerned particularly with exemplary Italian moral qualities.⁵⁴ If, however, one reads together all the fragments that we have, such interpretations begin to seem unduly narrow, and misleading.

Cato's interest in origins, lands, peoples, and *nomoi* ('customs') set him firmly in the tradition of ancient ethnographical literature, which has its roots, if not in Homer, then certainly in the geographical interests of the archaic period.⁵⁵ The origins of Italian peoples are frequently linked to the familiar wanderings of heroes after the Trojan War, alternative 'indigenous' versions given here and there, as is familiar in traditions of 'barbarian' origins in general.⁵⁶ There is interest in setting down 'local' versions, a feature of ancient ethnographical writing that is particularly familiar from Herodotus.⁵⁷

Beyond these features, however, the arrangement of the work as a whole needs explanation. Italy is without doubt being viewed as an entity in some sense (but never, of course, a cultural entity), framed within two books of the *Origines*, where, interestingly, details of the peoples and lands of Cisalpine Gaul are also included.⁵⁸ The concept of a particular and peculiar relationship of Rome to Italy, which at this stage seems to have meant central and southern Italy, had already begun to be visible in evidence relating to the mid- to later third century BC. At this point, indications of a concept of Italy in juridical terms suggest that Rome has begun to move beyond the geographical and political conceptions of Italy developed in Graeco-Italian contexts.⁵⁹ For Cato, *Italia* apparently continued to be bounded by the

⁵⁴ e.g. C. Letta, 'I mores dei romani e l'origine dei sabini in Catone', *PSCS* (1985), 15 ff.; J. Poucet, 'Les Origines mythiques des Sabins à travers l'œuvre de Caton, de Cn. Gellius, de Varron, d'Hygin et de Strabon', *Études Etrusco-Italiques*, Univ. de Louvain, *Recueil de trav. d'hist. et de philol.*, 4th ser., 31 (1963), 161 ff.

⁵⁵ O. Murray, 'Omero e l'etnologia', *Magna Graecia*, 14: 9/10, (1989), 1 ff., discusses the relationship of Homer to the ethnographical tradition.

⁵⁶ e.g. 2. 21–2 (Chass.).

⁵⁷ e.g. 3. 4 (Chass.).

⁵⁸ 2. 1–14 (Chass.).

⁵⁹ For early concepts of Italy, see e.g. F. Lepore, 'L'Italia nella formazione della comunità romano-italico', *Klearchos*, 5 (1963), 89 ff.; S. Mazzarino, *Il pensiero storico classico*, (Bari, 1966) ii/1; E. Gabba, 'Il problema dell' "unità" dell'Italia romana', in *La cultura italica* (Pisa, 1978), 11 ff.; F. Prontera, 'Imagines Italiae: Sulle più antiche visualizzazioni e rappresentazioni geografiche dell'Italia', *Athen.* 64 (1986), 295 ff.

northern Apennines.⁶⁰ However, the inclusion of details about Cisalpine Gaul, prefacing accounts of Italian peoples, after the invasion of Hannibal, and Roman campaigns in the far north, is suggestive. The detail given in descriptions of the extreme north of Italy is striking,⁶¹ and Cato's careful 'cataloguing' of lands and places in Italy as a whole fits well Oswyn Murray's general explanation of dynamic ethnographical impulses in terms of a desire to depict and 'account for' a world the horizons of which were newly expanded.⁶² Furthermore, Cato apparently applied to the Alps the image of a wall, 'muri vice': it may be that Hannibal's invasion from the north fostered a new sense of the Alps as being a geographical boundary of Rome's sphere of involvement.⁶³ Cato's *Origines* might, then, be seen as an appraisal of a newly perceived geographical entity made up of peoples closely involved with, or subject to, the Romans.

Livy's narrative of the Samnite Wars in Books 7–10 is framed with a late Republican/early Imperial interest in the privileged status of Italy within the Roman Empire. Not surprisingly, the conquest of Italy by Rome seems inevitable, despite one or two tragic and suspense-filled episodes such as the defeat at Caudium: hints of Rome's coming imperial grandeur are given even in Livy's account of early Rome.⁶⁴ Individual events are tied neatly into a scheme that looks forward to the period after the Social War. Within Livy's account of the Middle Republic, there is considerable interest in the citizenship: the narrative is constructed to emphasize Rome's particular and peculiar means of expansion through extension of the citizenship.⁶⁵ The Samnite Wars function as an important turning-point: Livy introduces them with statements about the unprecedented scale of the campaigns and strength of the enemy, looking forward to the future conflict with

⁶⁰ T. J. Cornell, *JRS* 78, (1988), 212; Crawford, 'Origini e sviluppi del sistema provinciale romano' (1990), 95 n. 15.

⁶¹ For examples of counting and cataloguing, see e.g. *Orig.* 2. 8, 2. 10, 2. 11, 2. 13; for Cisalpine Gaul as a new and strange place, see Purcell, 'The Creation of Provincial Landscape', 11.

⁶² O. Murray, 'Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture', *CQ* 22 ns (1972), 200 ff., 201.

⁶³ 4. 10 (Chass.) = Servius *Ad Verg. Aen.* 10. 12: 'Alpes quae secundum Catonem et Livium muri vice tuebantur Italiam.' ('The Alps which, according to Cato and Livy, protected Italy like a wall.')

⁶⁴ On Roman destiny to become the *caput rerum*, see Livy 1. 45. 3 (with R. Ogilvie (ed.)), 4. *Commentary on Livy Books 1–5* (Oxford, 1965) *ad loc.* for Augustan overtones, and 1. 55. 6.

⁶⁵ J. Lipovsky, *A Historiographical Study of Livy Books 6–10* (New York, 1981), 88–9.

with statements about the unprecedented scale of the campaigns and strength of the enemy, looking forward to the future conflict with Pyrrhus, and represents the Romans and Samnites as fighting over the hegemony of Italy.⁶⁶ The sense of the relentless progress of Rome, and of her particular way of achieving the conquest of Italy are surely due to hindsight: what hints we have of Middle Republican ideology suggest that a consciousness of a special relationship of Italy to Rome was something that emerged much more clearly well into the third century BC.

Despite this, Livy's narrative is obviously very far from being a reflection of the preoccupations of the Late Republican/Augustan age alone. For one thing, there is the long-recognized fact that Livy's account of the history of Rome post-390 is of an entirely different quality in terms of detail from that of his account of early Rome, and very much more credible in consequence.⁶⁷ For another thing, Livy's precise references to older authorities, although infrequent, are a reflection of the fact that he is clearly conscious of the value of being seen to use older traditions.⁶⁸

Furthermore, Livy uses and alludes to long-established 'ways of seeing' to pattern and interpret events. This phenomenon of 'persistence of vision' is in general of great importance in considering ancient views of 'other peoples', and, in fact, in considering ancient views of connection and causation in general. At times he is explicit about his awareness of the history of the frameworks he uses: thus, for example, in his first book, Rome's tragic fall down into tyranny under Tarquinius Superbus is framed with reference to Attic tragedy.⁶⁹ At other times, the allusion is not made explicit, but when we read the debate that leads up to the Campanian *deditio* in Livy's seventh book, it is hard to resist the conclusion that Livy at least knows *about* the Corcyrean debate in Thucydides.⁷⁰ For my purposes, the most relevant case of allusion of this kind is precisely Livy's depiction of the Samnites as *montani atque agrestes*, in contrast to the 'softer'

⁶⁶ Livy 7. 29, 8. 23.

⁶⁷ T. J. Cornell, 'The Recovery of Rome', *CAH*(2) vii/2 (Cambridge, 1989), 309 ff., 311.

⁶⁸ On Livy's sources, see Walsh, *Livy*, ch. 5.
⁶⁹ Livy 1. 46. 3, 'tulit enim et Romana regia sceleris tragici exemplum' ('For the royal house of Rome too produced an example of tragic crime'), cf. Ogilvie, *Livy Books 1-5*, 186, for discussion of tragic overtones in Livy's telling of tyranny at Rome.

⁷⁰ Livy 7. 30-1; cf. Thuc. 1. 31 ff.; for the Campanian *deditio* as plausible within a Hellenistic context, see M. Frederiksen, *Campania*, ed. N. Purcell (London, 1984), 190.

⁷¹ Livy 9. 13. 7.

agricultural plains-people of Arpi.⁷¹ Once again, this patterning of character according to mountain or plain environment seems to allude to the final chapter of Herodotus.⁷² Or, at the very least, he is clearly writing within a tradition of explaining character through environment, which goes back at least to the late fifth century BC.⁷³

It is at this point that reading Livy becomes particularly difficult. At first sight, the simplest solution might seem to be to set Livy within a 'Greek' literary tradition of explaining character in environmental terms, and to see this tradition as entirely irrelevant to Roman or Italian contemporary perception of events in the late fourth and early third centuries BC. In this case, we would be required to imagine Livy embellishing his bald, 'annalistic' account with more sophisticated flourishes, thus creating *ex novo* for Rome a grandiose narrative of her rise to hegemony, in the manner of fifth-century Athens. This explanation seems, however, to be reductive and over-simple, and in fact hints at a stereotypical view of both Roman and Greek culture, Middle Republican Rome on this account being 'obviously' isolated from the development of Hellenistic ideology.⁷⁴

While Livy's depiction of the Samnites works—and is made to work—perfectly well within its context of his narrative of the Samnite Wars, there is nothing *prima facie* unlikely about the suggestion that the Romans of the late fourth and early third centuries BC were in fact aware of the value of Hellenistic ideology of conquest of, and relations with, 'other peoples'. I shall argue in Chapters 1 and 2 that aspects of Livy's portrayal of the Samnite Wars fit remarkably well into the picture of contemporary Italian ideology that we can reconstruct from a variety of kinds of evidence.

4. MODERN 'WAYS OF SEEING'

My analysis of perceptions of the peoples of the Central Apennines owes a great deal to recent work on fifth-century Greece. One particularly important book is François Hartog's *The Mirror of Herodotus*, showing the extent to which Herodotus translates

⁷² Herod. 9. 122.

⁷³ e.g. J. Gould, *Herodotus* (London, 1989), 96.

⁷⁴ For an over-sceptical account of the culture of fourth-century Rome, see R. Wallace, 'Hellenization and Roman Society in the Late Fourth Century BC: A Methodological Critique', in W. Eder (ed.), *Staat und Staatlichkeit in der frühen römischen Republik* (Stuttgart, 1990), 278 ff., and the criticism by Torelli that follows in the same volume.

on the 'truth' or 'falsity' of Herodotus.⁷⁵ Another is Edith Hall's *Inventing the Barbarian*, which deals with fifth-century Athenian self-definition and self-promotion through the construction of 'Otherness': Persia in this case.⁷⁶ While such studies use to great effect the conceptual framework of alterity, applied comparatively recently to the ancient world, there is a longer history of recognition of the importance of polarities within Greek thought, and of the construction of barbarian and past societies as alternatives to a perceived Greek (or, more usually, Athenian) norm. The importance of the Greek/barbarian polarity was recognized in scholarship of the 1920s, while in the 1960s G. E. R. Lloyd identified a fundamental pattern in early Greek thought in his *Polarity and Analogy*,⁷⁷ and Simon Pembroke revealed images of female power in Greek writing about other societies and prior times to be a construction of an alternative, working from a norm, rather than the simple description of reality.⁷⁸ This theme of self-definition through the construction of complementary 'others' is obviously important in this book, as is the development of Greek ideas about other peoples, and the appropriation and reformulation of these ideas by Rome.

In some important respects, however, my approach to the construction of images of 'other peoples' is necessarily different from studies such as those of Hartog and Hall, partly as a result of the high level of interaction between cultures in ancient Italy. The ethnographical discourse with which I am concerned cannot be fully explained by reference to 'internal' factors, the concerns and preoccupations of Greek and Roman society. While, at times, under certain conditions, Greek and Roman images of Italian peoples tend towards non-specific generalizations, on the whole this discourse is characterized by considerable attention to detail. Certainly, detail is selected out and framed according to persisting patterns of 'ways of seeing', but these images by and large do not give the impression of being purely the products of Greek and Roman imagination.

The manner in which one group perceives another, and the forma-

⁷⁵ F. Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* Eng. trans. (Berkeley, 1988).

⁷⁶ E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* (Oxford, 1989).

⁷⁷ J. Jüthner, *Hellenen und Barbaren* (Leipzig, 1923); M. Mühl, *Antike Menschheitsidee* (Leipzig, 1928); G. E. R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy: Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Cambridge, 1966).

⁷⁸ S. Pembroke, 'Women in Charge: The Function of Alternatives in Early Greek Tradition and the Ancient Idea of Matriarchy', *Journal of the Warburg and the Courtauld Institutes*, 30 (1967), 1 ff.

tion of ethnic stereotypes, is very complex, particularly when one is looking at situations in which the racist framework of many societies in the twentieth century is not in existence. Such stereotypes usually arise first in a situation of tension or conflict. There might be internal conflict or tension within group A which leads to the association of group B with particular values, but there is likely also to be some history of conflict or tension between group A and group B: this might take, or have taken, the form of competition over land or resources, or conflict between two imperial powers, or justification for the subjection of one group to another. In such situations, the us/them boundary is most clearly perceived. At this us/them boundary, physiognomic, behavioural, linguistic, or other perceived differences will be selected out and interpreted. It is important to realize that one group can have a series of stereotypes, in which ethnic 'characters' are quite clearly differentiated. For the English, the French, Spanish, and German 'characters' are not uniformly not-English, and while all these nations are regularly regarded as 'bad', they are 'bad' in very different ways. The French are over-fond of food and sex, the Spanish are lecherous, bloodthirsty, and mustachioed, the Germans are bloodless and authoritarian. Each of these 'characters' is the result of the observation of one set of cultural practices through the structures of another, a kind of amateur anthropology. This perception of peoples through a culturally specific grid also seems characteristic of ancient ethnography.

Thus it is clear that a reconstruction of local society can be very helpful in illuminating the complex process of perception. One thing that a study of local material culture can achieve is to tell us more about what the Romans, for example, wanted to 'see' in this area by showing what they failed to 'see',⁷⁹ such as urban structures. But sometimes group A picks out as typical of group B as a whole, and gives meaning to, features which are used—or were once used—to serve a very different purpose within group B itself. Sometimes apparently banal items of difference which are picked up may represent very much more profound and interesting differences in the individual social structures and history of each group. For the English, for example, 'French cuisine' and Cordon Bleu cookery serve as 'empirical' confirmation of what we all 'know' about the

⁷⁹ Selective 'seeing' is a common phenomenon in the maintenance of stereotypes: cf. J. Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies* (Cambridge, 1983), 17–18; 31, for a fine discussion of the ability of British Gorgios to 'see' only those features of Gypsies which answer to their need for an exotic 'Other'.

French as a whole: they are fussy, decadent, and fond of luxury. Hence their love of rich sauces which are time-consuming and complicated to prepare, but which provide the English with a great treat on their occasional forays into the life of luxury. Within France, however, such food was not historically typical of the people as a whole. Cookery of this kind was a mark of the French urban élite, who, by the nineteenth century, were very much more clearly divided off from the rural population than were the contemporary English élite.⁸⁰

In my second part I try, then, to reconstruct a local context for aspects of the peoples of the Central Apennines that recur in Greek and Roman ideology. Certainly, differences were sharpened in Greek and Roman thought, and, as I have shown above, it is easy enough to find material that will contradict Greek and Roman images of marginality and poverty. At other times, features upon which Greek and Roman writers focused might have been manifestations of things important within local society itself: either to a subgroup or to the group as a whole. While Marsi were apparently synonymous with snake-charming at Rome, within Marsic society those with powers over snakes were apparently a restricted group. While Marsic snake-charmers seem to dramatize in Roman thought the exotic, or even sinister aspect of an area on the margins of Roman control, amongst the Marsi, the cult of Angitia, within which snake-charming was apparently a feature, was clearly sponsored by the élite.

Similarly, the theme of the austerity of mountain-people is important in late Republican and early Imperial historiography, while the peoples of the Central Apennines were renowned for the quantity and quality of the troops they provided. In Chapters 1 and 2, I examine the development of such images of austerity and the useful provision of troops within the structures of Greek and Roman thought. It is, however, necessary to explain why certain peoples were idealized in this way, and others, such as Etruscans, were not. In Chapter 3, I explore the possibility that Roman ideology of this kind touched also on a profound difference in social structures and outlook in the Central Apennines, and suggest that local society, particularly before

⁸⁰ M. McDonald, *'We Are Not French!': Language, Culture and Ethnicity in Brittany* (London, 1989), 20 ff., for a discussion of the formation of ethnic stereotypes and, in particular, for English views of the French.

the Social War, was characterized by a thriving free peasantry and relative social equality in terms of the use of wealth.

Finally, in Chapter 5, I consider notions of identity: in particular, I question modern explanations of historical action on the part of peoples of the Central Apennines in terms of supposedly 'objective' common identity based on their primitive unity, and reflected in their myths of origin. On this analysis, the composition of the Italian alliance against Rome in the Social War in particular may be explained by historians through reference to 'roots': the past explains the present in a relatively straightforward fashion. Demonstrating the large variety of myths of origin that may be argued to have been asserted by peoples of the Central Apennines themselves, I suggest that changes and fluctuations in questions of identity should be emphasized. I consider different social, cultural, and historical contexts for these expressions of connection and difference, looking at ways in which various myths of origins might have been used to explain actions, and to make assertions about common identity. Notions of identity within the context of cultural exchange in central and southern Italy are highly complex, and one important theme of this chapter will be the different perspectives expressed on identity of selves and others, from the archaic period to the aftermath of the Social War.

PART 1
GREEK AND ROMAN CONTEXTS

I

Greek Contexts

INTRODUCTION

Roman discourse is imbued with 'Greek' themes, and provides us with an excellent and comparatively familiar example of the complexity of relations between cultures in ancient Italy. Roman literature begins late, and plunges us into a complex cultural world. The earliest Roman literature presupposes knowledge of 'Greek' themes, and suggests the great extent to which Greek and Roman thought were linked. There are examples of clearly self-conscious adoptions and adaptations of a specifically Greek world-view. Thus, characters in Plautus make jokes which subvert to humorous effect Greek ethnocentrism which divided up the world into Greeks and barbarians.¹ Or the Romans may take the place of the Greeks in this dichotomy: while Plautus' Carthaginians in the *Poenulus* are ultimately sympathetic characters, initially their portrayal reminds us strongly of the 'Eastern barbarians' of Greek literature, like Lydians, or, even more strikingly, Persians.² And

¹ See e.g. *Cas.* 747, where a character expresses a desire for a nice dinner rather than barbarian (i.e. Roman) rubbish; *Tri.* 19 for the idea that Plautus translated the play *barbare* ('into barbarian tongue', i.e. into Latin).

² Both Carthaginians in second-century Roman discourse and Lydians/Persians in fifth-century Greek discourse are particularly reviled for their effeminate dress and behaviour.

For Carthaginians, see e.g. *Poen.* e.g. 1311 for *mulierosum genus* ('womanish species') with long tunics; 1317–18 for the comment that the Carthaginian looks like a *cinaedus*.

For Lydians/Persians, see e.g. Aristophanes *Ach.* for remarks made about envoys apparently returning from the Persian court, and presumably infected by the Persian life-style, esp. 64 for 'peacocks', presumably a reference to their brightly coloured clothing; 70 *malthakos katakeimenoi* ('reclining luxuriantly') as a general summary of the Persian life-style; 77 for contrasting Greek and Persian ideas of wherein consists 'real manhood'; 117 for reference to envoys as a pair of eunuchs; Herod. 1. 71 for Sandanis to Croesus on Persia (before the Fall), speaking against the more effeminate dress-wearing, pudding-eating Lydians, behaviour by which Herodotus implies that Persia is now contaminated (9. 22). For Persian sexuality as constructed by fifth-century Athens, see E. Hall, 'Asia Unmanned: Images of Victory in Classical Athens', in J. Rich and G. Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Greek World* (London, 1993), 108 ff.

already in the Elder Cato, Spartans carry a special, moral, weight, as they have done periodically in Athenian literature.³ But frequently also, Plautus' characters make shorthand allusion to what are traditionally thought of as 'Greek' myths: the wanderings of Odysseus, the Trojan tales, the trials of Hercules, or the deeds of Orestes.⁴ In short, Roman consciousness of 'Greek' themes seems to work on more than one level.

How should we account for and describe this close connection between Greek and Roman thought? The Roman imagination has too often been regarded as, at worst, deficient and derivative, and, at best, pragmatic rather than sophistic.⁵ This idea has a long history. By the Late Republic, Romans were themselves hard at work constructing the 'true' and ancient Roman character, busy 'doers' permanently involved in military matters, without the time or inclination to turn to softer, lazier, and altogether more decadent things such as sitting around and talking or writing books. Such pursuits came later, in an inferior social and moral climate.⁶ It is important to stress that this 'national character' was a construct, as was the 'Greek character' with which it was contrasted, belonging to a specific historical context and answering specific needs, and I shall treat this point in detail in Chapter 2, 'Roman Contexts'. Nevertheless, the idea of the paucity of Rome's cultural heritage, now perceived in rather less positive terms than it sometimes was by the Romans themselves, is remarkably durable in modern scholarship.

The relationship between Greek and Roman thought has generally been over-simplified in modern accounts, and has not often been

³ See Cato *Orig.* 2. 22, 4. 7 (Chass.). For comprehensive accounts of uses of the 'Spartan myth', see E. N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* (Lund, 1965), i (Uppsala, 1974) ii; for a broader, but shorter, survey, see E. D. Rawson, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* (Oxford, 1969).

⁴ See e.g. Plaut., *Ep.* 36 for Achilles; *Mer.* 488 for Hector and Achilles; *Mer.* 945 cf. *Men.* 748 for Calchas; *Per.* 1 ff.; for adventures of Hercules, *Men.* 201. *Ba.* 155, *Ep.* 179.

⁵ For summary and criticism of such views, see T. P. Wiseman, 'Roman Legend and Oral Tradition', *JRS* 79 (1989), 129 ff.

⁶ See e.g. Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae* 1-13, esp. 8 for contrast between Athenian commemoration of their deeds through history writing, and the Romans' lack of time for such pursuits in their heyday: 'at populo Romano numquam ea copia fuit, quia prudentissimus quisque maxime negotiosus erat; ingenium nemo sine corpore exercebat; optimus quisque facere quam dicere, sua ab aliis benefacta laudari quam ipse aliorum malebat.' ('But the Roman people never had this advantage since their wisest men were also the busiest; no one exercised his mind without exercising his body; the best men preferred to take action rather than to talk about it, to have their own good deeds praised by others, rather than praising the good deeds of others.')

considered to be an interesting subject in itself. Much admirable work has been done on Greek ethnocentrism, and the imposition of the Greek world view on other peoples.⁷ Ironically, of course, in focusing attention away from 'native' points of view, this pursuit might itself be in danger of becoming 'Hellenocentric', especially if we were to apply the model of fifth-century Athenian ethnocentrism to the very different political, social, and cultural conditions of ancient Italy. The subject of Roman ideology provides us with an excellent counterbalance, showing not only how a non-Greek people manipulated Greek themes to their own advantage from the beginnings of Roman literature, but how also, as Wiseman has convincingly argued, such a society might have had close contact with Greek ideas about the external world as they were developing in Greek society itself.⁸ To concentrate narrowly on Rome, however, is to obscure a very much broader context of Italian cultural interaction from the time of the earliest Greek colonies. Tyrrhenian Italy is a special case in this respect:⁹ the peoples in this area had a highly articulated social organization at the time of the earliest Greek settlement here, and no doubt the early presence of recognizable élites¹⁰ is an important factor in explaining the comparatively abundant evidence for the portrayal of myths within the context of prestige items such as fine-ware, mirrors, tomb-painting, and jewellery.

Nevertheless, it is important not to ignore signs of appropriation of and even input into myth on the part of other Italian peoples as they came into direct contact with the Greek settlements of the coasts. The limited territories of the Greek cities in Italy and the different goods Greeks and non-Greeks may have had to offer each other meant that interdependent relations with the native peoples of the hinterland were an important feature.¹¹ Nor do the early Greek settlers always seem to have felt that the land in which they had settled was a blank

⁷ See e.g. E. Bickerman, 'Origines Gentium', *CP* 47 (1952), 65 ff.; more recently, Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*.

⁸ Wiseman, 'Roman Legend'.

⁹ See e.g. A. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom* (Cambridge, 1975), 7 for the remarkable degree of cultural interaction in Etruria and Rome.

¹⁰ See M. Torelli, 'Le popolazioni dell'Italia antica: società e forme del potere', in *Storia di Roma*, i. *Roma in Italia* (Turin, 1988), 53 ff., especially 57 ff.

¹¹ e.g. R. D. Whitehouse and J. B. Wilkins, 'Greeks and Natives in South-East Italy: Approaches to the Archaeological Evidence', in T. C. Champion (ed.), *Centre and Periphery* (London, 1989), 102 ff., 114–15 for the importance of trade even in the deep south of Italy where useful metals and minerals were not available. The authors suggest that the natives were exchanging for their prestige goods materials such as wool, and possibly animals for meat as well.

seem to have felt that the land in which they had settled was a blank screen on which they could project their own sense of the world: there were certainly cases where religious practices and *mores* ('customs') of the new colony reflected close interaction between Greeks and indigenous peoples. These factors should lead us to expect that the development of Greek discourse in general, reflecting interaction of this kind, will be complex, and will by no means always be one-sided. One of my purposes here is to emphasize the elasticity of myth and of ideological themes in general: one myth or theme may serve a variety of different purposes, the direction it takes depending on the concerns and needs of the culture that uses it.

1. MAKING MYTHS

One important strand in Latin literature will be the localization in Italy of 'Greek' gods and heroes. Perhaps the best known myths in this context are the wanderings of Herakles and the arrival of Aeneas, but projected back beyond these civilizing influences are intimations of a more primitive or exotic past, often in itself represented by various 'Greek' gods and heroes: Italy is a wild place for Dionysus and his satyrs to roam, a suitable place for Arcadians, the 'acorn-eaters' of Greek thought, to colonize, a place of exile for Kronos/Saturn, his kingdom variously a utopian paradise or an age characterized by the less desirable practices of the uncivilized, such as cannibalism.¹² Odysseus is the father of various eponymous ancestors of Italian peoples, and eventually, according to some, of the Romans themselves, but their mother is Circe, hardly the most straightforward of mythical women.¹³ Ideas of primitivism and exoti-

¹² Dionysus and his satyrs: Soph. *Ant.* 1118. Arcadians: J. Bayet, *Les Origines de L'Hercule romain* (Paris, 1926), 62. Kronos/Saturn: Ennius *Euhemerus* 1. 60 ff. for cannibalism in the reign of Saturn in Italy; Pindar *Ol.* 2. 70 for the age of Kronos as a lost wonderland.

¹³ Hesiod *Theog.* 1011–16 for Latinus and Agrios as sons of Odysseus and Circe; Telegonus (probably interpolated at a late date at *Theog.* 1014: West (ed.), *Hesiod, Theogony*, (ad loc.), later thought to be the founder of Tusculum and Praeneste (Hor. *Odes* 2. 29. 8; Plutarch, *Mor.* 316A), featured in the fifth century BC in Aeschylus' tetralogy which included his satyr-play *Circe*: T. P. Wiseman, 'Satyrs at Rome? The Background to Horace's *Ars Poetica*', *JRS* 78 (1988), 1 ff., 6; cf. R. Seaford, *Euripides' Cyclops* (Oxford, 1984), 22, 24. By the time of Xenagoras in the early first century BC, Odysseus and Circe have as their offspring Rhomos, Anteias and Ardeias: Xenagoras *FGH* 240 F 29 cf. anon. ap. Plut. *Rom.* 2. 1 for Romanus.

cism will be important in the discussion of the development of Roman ideology, and may be construed in a positive or a negative sense, with all sorts of implications for Roman self-representation and for representation of other Italian peoples, particularly those of the Central Apennines. But where does this idea originate, and what is its early history?

(a) *The Greek Discourse of Colonization*

Motifs of arduous travels over strange seas and lands inhabited by alluring or threatening monsters, or by humans with strange powers, customs, and relationships with the gods, are recurrent even in the earliest Greek literature such as the *Odyssey*, and reflected also in stories surrounding other 'returning heroes' of the Trojan Wars, and other wandering heroes, such as Jason and the Argonauts, and Herakles. At a comparatively early date, the wanderings of Odysseus were localized in the western seas and some of the more unsavoury creatures he encounters were given homes in Italy and Sicily. Myths of the wanderings of gods and heroes in the western Mediterranean are ultimately clustered tightest around areas extensively colonized from an early date, such as the Tyrrhenian coast, the deep south, and Sicily.¹⁴ For a long time, scholars have been alert to such coincidence and have made connections between the localized travels and adventures of Odysseus and other Greek heroes and gods on the one hand and on the other the experience of historical Greek traders and colonists.

But did the Greek traders and colonists follow the myth, or was the myth only localized after the establishment of colonies? More generally, what is the relationship between, on the one hand, historical sea-travelling and colonization of the eighth century bc onwards and, on the other hand, myths of wandering heroes? While the Homeric poems apparently have their origins in eastern Greece, the fact that the first written allusion to them, in the form of the inscription on 'Nestor's Cup' around 700 bc, comes from Tyrrhenian Italy is suggestive, and may have all sorts of consequences for the way in which we think about influence on the ideology of 'western Greeks'

¹⁴ See e.g. Bayet, *L'Hercule romain*, 48 ff., for the connection between Greek traffic-routes and legends in Italy; L. Pearson, 'Myth and *Archaeologia* in Italy and Sicily: Timaeus and his Predecessors', *YCS* 24 (1975), 171 ff., 185 for suggestion that stories set in south Italy and Sicily are often of a particularly early date.

and other peoples of Italy.¹⁵ Scholars once inclined to the view that sea-travellers of the eighth century BC onwards were following the myth, consciously re-enacting the last great age of long-haul sea-voyages during the Mycenaean period, and that the returning heroes represented a saga, a folk-memory recalling journeys of these predecessors.¹⁶ The real problem with this theory, as Ridgway has pointed out, is that the voyages of Odysseus in the *Odyssey* display no precise knowledge of the geography of the western Mediterranean, where Mycenaean and Euboean travellers alike were particularly active, and where many of the myths of heroic travellers were to be localized.¹⁷ Modern reconstructions of the voyages of the Homeric Odysseus, localizing his ports of call in the western seas, particularly around Sicily, carry no conviction: no detailed reference to this area ever occurs in the tales of his wanderings, and clashing rocks and dangerous straits cannot with any confidence be fixed in the Italian and Sicilian seas without such place-names to help us. It is true that the names of historical places and peoples crop up, such as Ithaca itself, Crete and Egypt, but, on the whole, the lack of concern for geographical precision is striking, and is indicative of the nature of the *Odyssey*: no 'charter myth', or even a reflection of the experiences of colonization, but rather a traveller's tale that seems to be deliberately removed from the sphere of historical experience.¹⁸

If eighth-century BC travellers and colonists were believed to be retracing consciously the footsteps of their Mycenaean forebears, another modern theory concentrated on revealing the geographical 'origins' of historical peoples, both Greek and 'native', according to a manner of thinking about origins and ethnic identity popular in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. According to this theory, legendary colonizers always stood for the 'real' colonization of Italy by individual groups represented by the heroes, each hero standing for a

¹⁵ For Nestor's cup, see e.g. G. Buchner and C. F. Russo, 'La coppa di Nestore e un'iscrizione metrica da Pithecusa dell'VIII secolo a. C.', *RAL* 10 (1955), 215 ff.; P. Hansen, 'Pithecusian Humour: The Interpretation of 'Nestor's Cup' Reconsidered', *Glotta* 54 (1976), 25 ff.; Wiseman, 'Roman Legend'.

¹⁶ For echoes of Mycenaean contacts in the *Odyssey*, see e.g. T. J. Dunbabin, *The Western Greeks* (Oxford, 1948), 1. For attempts to see the *Odyssey* itself as geographically precise with regard to the western seas, see W. B. Stanford and J. V. Luce, *The Quest for Ulysses* (London, 1974).

¹⁷ D. Ridgway, 'The First Western Greeks and their Neighbours, 1935-85', in J. P. Descœudres (ed.), *Greek Colonists and Native Populations* (Oxford, 1990), 69.

¹⁸ Crete: e.g. 3. 191, 3. 291; Egypt: e.g. 3. 300, 4. 351; cf. Murray, 'Omero e l'etnologia'.

specific ethnic group, and the voyages of legendary heroes mapping out in a straightforward manner the passage of their cult in new lands.¹⁹

In 1952, Bickerman championed a very much more sophisticated framework for the discussion of these mythical wandering heroes, and this theory has rightly been highly influential in modern discussions of Greek ideology in general. For Bickerman, myths of far-flung heroes represented nothing more than the ethnocentrism of historical Greeks. The Greeks cared nothing, he argued, for what 'native' peoples said themselves about their origins, but imposed upon them whatever origins suited their own world-view. This article very impressively challenged the hitherto prevalent view that myths of colonization by heroes were somehow 'objective' statements about the ethnicity of native peoples, the study of whose 'origins' could then be based on such 'records' of their migration from the Eastern Mediterranean.²⁰ Instead, Bickerman emphasized the value of looking at what these stories said about the people who told them, rather than about the people with whom they were ostensibly concerned. The parallel from modern history which he chose was that of the German scholar Hugo Grotius, who suggested that the North American Indians were Germans, the people of the Yucatan were from Ethiopia, and the Peruvians were descended from the Chinese. These 'origins' tell us nothing about native Americans or Peruvians, but a great deal about the contemporary German view of the world and their place within it.²¹

More recently, detailed work has been done on various phases of 'Hellenocentrism', and, of this, the most relevant to my present purpose is the study of the Greek 'discourse of colonization'. Scholars have looked closely at Greek myths relating to sea travel and to colonization, and have found interesting parallels in other, more recent ages of exploration, 'discovery', and colonization, arguing that this kind of activity results in similar kinds of perception.²² Some of these parallels are very suggestive. Greek myths relating to sea-travel are, from the *Odyssey* onwards, full of monsters, strange and exotic lands, mysterious, beguiling, or downright unfriendly natives with peculiar habits which run contrary to Greek norms of civilized behaviour, and,

¹⁹ Bickerman, 'Origines Gentium', 65 ff.; cf. Banton, *Racial Theories*, ch. 1.

²⁰ Bickerman, 'Origines Gentium', 66, on modern attempts to find evidence of real cults and colonizers from Troy in Italy in order to substantiate the ancient Aeneas-traditions.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See e.g. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 47–50.

on the more positive side, hopes of gain in the form of more or less exotic goods. Similar motifs occur in Western literature from the diaries of Christopher Columbus to those of Captain Cook and beyond.²³ Sea monsters and Eldorados, cannibals and Noble Savages with exotic names, reflect the perils of sea-voyage, the hopes and fears of the travellers relating to the territories they are 'discovering' and to the native peoples they encounter. Importantly too, in these more recent periods of history, when the natives are more obviously human than monstrous, they are assimilated to the known, using the frames of reference of the travellers themselves. Thus, for example, the dark-skinned inhabitants of the Americas are labelled 'Indians', and the Hindus of the Indian subcontinent were originally assumed to be especially pious devotees of the Christian saints, judging from their collections of holy pictures of gods and goddesses.²⁴

The *Odyssey* itself seems to reflect aspirations and experiences of early Greek travel in a very stylized way that, highly mediated by the world of myth, perhaps partly reflects the desire to make heroic the deeds of contemporary travellers. While travel is a key motif of this epic, colonization is not really a feature. However, once Greek myths have become localized in Italy, it is possible to see more specific reflections of the experiences of encounters and colonization. The earliest mythical ancestry we know of relating to Italian peoples is the Hesiodic reference to Circe and Odysseus as parents of Latinus and Agrios, kings of the Tyrrhenians.²⁵ Myth and the names of historical peoples, as well as the generic Wild Man, who presumably stands for any other ethnic groups in the area, are nicely combined in this example. But the choice of myth here is very striking: the Greek imagination was capable of conjuring up all sorts of ways in which familiar heroes could contribute to the peopling of far-flung lands:

²³ For accounts of travellers in the early modern period, see e.g. A. Gerbi, 'The Earliest Accounts on the New World', in F. Chiappelli *et al.*, *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old* (Berkeley, 1976), i. 37 ff.; cf. W. C. Sturtevant, 'First Visual Images of America', in the same volume, 417 ff. It is, however, well worth pointing out the possibility of self-conscious 'recollections' of images taken from Greek myth: e.g. L. A. de Bougainville, *A Voyage Round the World* (1772) on Tahiti, 'one would think himself in the Elysian fields'.

²⁴ 'Indians': H. Isaacs, 'Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe', in N. Glazer and D. P. Moynihan (eds.), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 29 ff., 48. Hindus as devout Catholics: Bickerman, 'Origines Gentium', 71.

²⁵ Hesiod *Theog.* 1011–16; cf. West, *Hesiod, Theogony*, 433 ff.

they could bring their own women, or marry local women as does Aeneas, or they could impregnate supernatural women. In the case of Odysseus, Circe is not the only choice available: in the course of his travels, Odysseus, as has been well noted, has relationships with various types of women, some more human than others: Circe, Calypso, and even Nausikaa.²⁶ It is tempting to see the Odysseus–Circe genealogy as, at least in part, a dramatization of the experiences and perceptions of early Greek colonists: in the *Odyssey*, Circe is a beguiling, sinister, threatening being who can also be tamed and subdued by Odysseus.²⁷ One might well imagine that all these aspects were part of the perception of Tyrrhenian Italy experienced by early Greek traders and colonists: fears of danger and difference, of a land which might or might not yield up its advantages. The location of specific episodes of the *Odyssey* in a ‘new’ land, Italy, might also legitimate the actions of historical settlers,²⁸ and give to new experiences a ring of familiarity by linking them in to older stories of travel.

Similarly, there is the genealogy given to Sicilians by Thucydides onwards: the origins of the earliest inhabitants of Sicily apparently lay in Cyclopes and Laestrygonians, some of the most outlandish and uncivilized creatures of the *Odyssey*.²⁹ Cannibalism, as practised by Cyclopes in the *Odyssey*, is widely alleged of foreign peoples, but actually very rarely attested in any reliable form,³⁰ and, along with one-eyed giants, is likely to be a dramatization of fears of difference and hostility. The pastoral activity of the Cyclopes is also very interesting, and, within the context of the *Odyssey*, it certainly looks as if pastoral activity is already being equated with less civilized forms of existence, although it is true that, within the work itself, the contrast is not so much between Greek and non-Greek as between human and non-human.³¹ Perhaps Greek travellers and colonists later selected local pastoral activity as their way of conceptualizing and

²⁶ For hints of a version of the Nausikaa story in which Odysseus and Nausikaa married, see Homer *Od.* 6. 276 ff.; 7. 313 ff. ²⁷ 10, esp. 310 ff.

²⁸ For the idea of ‘charter myths’, see e.g. I. Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece* (Leiden, 1987), 6; Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 48–9; P. Guzzo, ‘Myths and Archaeology in South Italy’, in Descoeudres, *Greek Colonists*, 140.

²⁹ Thuc. 6. 2. 1; cf. Homer *Od.* 9. 105 ff., 10. 80–132 for general character of Cyclopes and Laestrygonians.

³⁰ See W. K. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1969), iii. 60–8, cf. W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (Oxford, 1979).

³¹ Murray, ‘Omero e l’etnologia’.

characterizing the difference between themselves and the native peoples they encountered in Sicily, using the story of the Cyclopes and placing the local peoples on the side of the non-human.³² As for the location of Dionysus and his Satyrs in Italy, it is surely significant that Dionysus is particularly associated with places which were clearly conceptualized as 'exotic', such as the East:³³ Italy, as a 'new land' could be another suitable place for him to roam. Coming 'down to earth' somewhat, there is the Lydian ancestry of the Etruscans attested in Herodotus, which was, until comparatively recently, influential amongst modern Etruscologists.³⁴ Far from being an objective statement about the ethnicity of the Etruscans, this was surely a device to link up two peoples who were perceived by the Greeks to be similarly exotic. Perhaps one could even see here a process which has two stages, an example of the unknown being assimilated to the known, the Lydians being known to Greeks at an earlier date than the Etruscans. Another hint about the way in which Italy was viewed by the Greeks is to be found in the name *Hesperia*, the 'land to the west',³⁵ a name which nicely conveys an impression of Italy being 'out there', rather like our expression 'Far East', which carries with it implications of our own sense of geographical centrality.

(b) Is That Really Us?

So far, Bickerman's model of Hellenocentrism, and the more recent variation on the theme, the Greek 'discourse of colonization' have seemed helpful ways to consider the origins of the collection of myths

³² Cf. B. D'Agostino, 'Il mondo periferico della Magna Grecia', *PCIA* 2 (Rome, 1974), 217, where he suggests that there is a connection between the Arcadian origins attributed to the Lucanians and Bruttians and their pastoral activity, the Arcadians being conceptualized as pastoralists *par excellence*.

³³ See Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 149 ff. for the Greek location of Dionysus in foreign parts.

³⁴ Herod. 1. 94; M. Pallottino, *A History of Earliest Italy* (London, 1991), 28 for comment on the strange tenacity of this idea in modern scholarship. NB however that Pallottino's negative attitude towards Lydian origins for the Etruscans should probably be considered in the context of his own insistence on a kind of pan-Italic cultural unity in pre-Roman Italy.

³⁵ For *Hesperia*, see e.g. Agathyllus of Arcadia ap. D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 49; Hesiod *Theog.* 215 for Hesperides as daughters of Night who live on an island on the western edge of the world, and guard a garden with golden apples; cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 742; cf. D.S. 4. 27; for the specific equation of 'the west' with Italy by the fifth century bc, see the reference to the western Locrians as *vesperioi* in *IG* 9. 334.

and legends about Italy in general, at least as seen from a Greek point of view. The nearest we can come to gaining some idea of the nature of the use of myth, and self-representation by means of it, is to survey early representations of mythological subjects in Etruscan art and vase-painting. As I have suggested above, there is an abundance of representation of myth within an Etruscan context, most probably because of the aristocratic nature of Etruscan society. The Etruscans cannot be assumed to have coveted pretty pictures on Greek vases while remaining totally ignorant of the myths portrayed on them, getting these 'wrong' when they attempted to depict them themselves, and unaware of any possibilities of appropriating myth for their own ends.³⁶ In fact, those who have made a close study of the iconography of the Etruscans are now arguing that the Etruscans knew very well what they were doing, even as early as the second half of the seventh century BC: recent studies of the Tragliatella oinochoe, Pania pyxis, and Aristonothos crater suggest Etruscan interest in the juxtaposition of mythological scenes and representations of activities in a manner that suggests that the world of myth—indeed, what we are accustomed to think of as Greek myth—was of great interest and use to these societies.³⁷

Certainly, there seems to be a long background to the fifth century situation, when mythical heroes are labelled with fully Etruscanized names, a factor which in itself would seem to suggest long familiarity.³⁸ But even before this, 'mistakes' can be explained in a way which is less unfavourable towards the Etruscans: there was no 'orthodox' account of myth, so there is no reason to explain Etruscan choice of a version that is obscure to us, or even non-existent elsewhere, in terms of Etruscan incomprehension of 'Greek' myth.³⁹

³⁶ N. Spivey and S. Stoddart, *Etruscan Italy* (London, 1990), 90 ff., esp. 98.

³⁷ For discussions, and illustrations, of 7th-cent. Etruscan uses of myth, see M. Menichetti, 'Le aristocrazie tirreniche: aspetti iconografici', *Storia di Roma* (Turin, 1988), i. 75 ff.; F. Massa Pairault, *Iconologia e politica nell'Italia antica* (Milan, 1992), 15 ff. For the Tragliatella oinochoe, see M. Menichetti, 'L'oinochôe di Tragliatella: mito e rito tra Grecia ed Etruria', *Ostraka*, 1. i (1992), 7 ff.; for the Pania pyxis, see M. Cristofani, 'Per una nuova lettura della pisside della Pania', *St. Etr.* 39 (1971), 63 ff.; for the Aristonothos crater, see M. Guarducci, 'Nuove considerazioni sul cratere di Aristonothos', *RAL* 31 (1976), 145 ff.

³⁸ Spivey and Stoddart, *Etruscan Italy*, 101 for e.g. *Truile* (Troilus), *Eivas* (Ajax), *Tuntile* (Tantalus) and *Ercle* (Hercules).

³⁹ Ibid. 102–3; for a very different view, see G. Camporeale, 'Saghe greche nell'arte etrusca arcaica', *PDP* 19 (1964), 428 ff.; id., 'Banalizzazioni etrusche di miti greci', in *Sudi in onore L. Banti* (Rome, 1965), 122–3.

Indeed, at times, it looks as if Etruscan 'deviance' may have a good ideological explanation, as in the case when, on an early fifth century vase now in the Louvre, Herakles, rather than Theseus, is portrayed with the Minotaur.⁴⁰ 'Ad-libbing' may well be the result of easy familiarity rather than of incomprehension. A growing body of evidence for symposiac activity on the part of the Etruscans may suggest a context for the development of 'Greek' myth to suit Etruscan purpose: wall-paintings at Tarquinii and Chiusi depict musical entertainment at banquets,⁴¹ and it may not be far-fetched to imagine that banqueters were also entertained by the performance of lyric songs that might link historical deeds with the world of myth.

It is, then, not idle to enquire about Etruscan taste in myth, and about Etruscan self-representation in general. According to our earliest Greek notice, the Etruscans were descended from Odysseus and Circe.⁴² Certainly by the time of Herodotus, the *communis opinio* was that the Etruscans were descended from Lydian colonists.⁴³ According to some studies of iconography, the figure of Circe occurs several times on Etruscan vases in the context of representations of ritual that make reference to the world of myth, one of a number of examples of myth being used by the Etruscan for 'internal' purposes, to reflect ritual and institutions of their own society. However, the Etruscans display no specific interest in the story of Odysseus and Circe: their encounter appears on just one vase, a black-figure example which is described by Beazley as being particularly poorly executed.⁴⁴ The scene looks very conventional: Odysseus holds a sword, Circe has her arms raised, and a pig-headed man looks on.⁴⁵ It is in fact hard to detect Etruscan concentration on any one myth, despite increasing use of mythical themes not only in vase-painting but in tomb-painting and private seals.⁴⁶

It is nevertheless interesting that some of the earliest representations of recognizable myths in Etruscan art, dating from the mid- to late seventh century BC, not only portray recognizable scenes from the *Odyssey*, but also apparently relate these scenes to ritual and historical

⁴⁰ Spivey and Stoddart, *Etruscan Italy*, 103.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 101.

⁴² Cf. n. 25 above.

⁴³ Herod. 1. 94.

⁴⁴ J. D. Beazley, *Etruscan Vase-Painting* (Oxford, 1947), 54.

⁴⁵ For an illustration, see *Monumenti inediti publicati dall'Istituto di Corrispondenza* (Rome 1849-53), vol. v, pl. 41.

⁴⁶ See the table of evidence in Spivey and Stoddart *Etruscan Italy*, 100. Cf. F. Massa Pairault, *Iconologia*, 19-20, for a discussion of the possible representation of figures of Circe in early Etruscan vase-painting.

events of importance within their own society. To take perhaps the best known example of this phenomenon, one might consider the Aristonothos crater, dating from about 650 bc, and now at Rome in the Palazzo dei Conservatori. This crater, signed by a Greek craftsman, Aristonothos, and found at Cerveteri (Caere), portrays on one side the blinding of the Cyclops: Odysseus and four companions are driving a stake into Polyphemus' eye. On the other side, an apparently historical sea-battle is portrayed. Whether or not we are to believe, with some commentators, that the Sicilian location of the Cyclops is relevant here, and that the sea-battle is to be read as a conflict between Etruscans and Sicilians, it remains very tempting to suppose that some sort of identification is being made between the world of myth and the historical world.⁴⁷

Even more familiarly, much later on, and well after Circe and Odysseus had been identified as the parents of the Etruscans, in the fourth century bc, historical Etruscans are apparently assimilated to mythical Greeks of the Trojan cycle. This assimilation becomes very suggestive within the context of contemporary Etruscan relations with Rome, the self-proclaimed descendants of Trojans. If the Romans' war with Pyrrhus could be perceived as a rerun of the Trojan war, so too might fourth century battles between Etruscans and Romans.⁴⁸ Just as in the seventh-century examples mentioned above, the Etruscans are apparently using myth in an opportunistic fashion, to make assertions about present actions and relationships.

The conclusions which may be drawn from this brief survey of early Etruscan use and appropriation of myth are that Etruscans were apparently alive to the possibilities of making myth their own. Such interest that there is in stories associated with the *Odyssey* is exhibited in a form specific to the needs and interests of their own society: Odysseus is associated with the 'winning side', in this case the Etruscans. As far as we can tell, within early iconography with a local context, there is no particular interest in emphasizing the mythical genealogies that occur in early Greek sources. Later, however, Tarchon was connected up with the Lydian story,⁴⁹ merging

⁴⁷ Menichetti, 'Le aristocrazie tirreniche'; Guarducci, 'Nuove considerazioni'; Massa Pairault, *Iconologia*, 19.

⁴⁸ Spivey and Stoddart, *Etruscan Italy*, 102. For conceptualization of the war with Pyrrhus, see *Enn. Ann.* 167 (Sk.).

⁴⁹ T. J. Cornell, 'Aeneas and the Twins', *PCPS* 201 (1975) 2 with n. 7; for a notice of later Etruscan acceptance of the Lydian story, see Tacitus *Ann.* 4. 55. Tarchon becomes the son of Tyrrhenus: Cato *Orig.* 2. 15 (Chass.); Strabo 5. 2. 2 = 219 C.

myth of indigenous origins with myth of arrival from elsewhere in a manner which is reminiscent of Roman genealogies that made Aeneas the ancestor of Romulus and Remus. Unfortunately, in the case of Tarchon, the local hero, and the Lydian ancestors, we do not know whether this connection was ever made by the Etruscans—or some Etruscans—themselves, let alone whether it originated in Etruscan quarters.

It is, however, worthwhile at this point to show that *prima facie* unpromising mythological material could be picked up and usefully emphasized by 'natives'. According to one version, Laestrygonians lived not in Sicily as Thucydides believed, but at Formiae on the Campanian coast.⁵⁰ A recurrent feature of localized myth is that it tends to jump around the Mediterranean, or particular areas of it, as the need is felt to link in new areas. Sometimes, mythological figures seem to move ever further afield, shadowing the movements of Greek travellers themselves. This seems to be what happens with the Pillars of Hercules, which move as the margins of the known world themselves adjust. By the Roman period, there are Pillars of Hercules in many parts of the known world.⁵¹ In other cases, native peoples themselves might conceivably take the initiative in appropriating for themselves a myth which was first attributed to some other location. In the case of Formiae, we simply do not know whether or not Greeks ever localized the land of the Laestrygonians there. It is hard to imagine why a native people should see any advantage in portraying themselves as unsavoury monsters before it became particularly desirable to assert connections with the Greek world at all costs, and studies of Etruscan artistic representation of myth suggest that self-identification with figures less dubious than Circe comes earliest. By at least the early Empire however, the Aelii Lamiae are asserting their descent from Lamius, King of the Laestrygonians, whose wife was an ogress of satyr-plays who ate children.⁵² Their motive was, presumably, something more than the bookish, aetiological entertainment which is too often supposed to have engendered Italian mythological heritage. A comparison might be made with the far less dramatic version of connections with the Greek mythical world which is asserted by the Thesunti Tauriani, according to the

⁵⁰ Cic. *Att.* 2. 13. 2; Hor. *Odes* 2. 16. 34; Pliny *NH* 3. 59; Sil. It. 7. 276. 410; 8. 529.

⁵¹ e.g. Strabo 3. 5. 5 = 169 C–3. 5. 6 = 172 C.

⁵² Cf. n. 50, above, and Wiseman, 'Satyrs at Rome?', 12.

Elder Cato. At their river Pecoli, the story went, one could still see up a tree a sword which Orestes left behind when he came here to purify himself after killing his mother.⁵³ Such relics and tourist attractions are plentiful in later Republican Italy. By no means every noble family could claim descent from Venus and not every people could credibly claim descent from Aeneas.⁵⁴ The stranger examples discussed above might suggest that the 'currency value' of Greek myth has increased dramatically. I would suggest that this increased 'currency value' has to do with developments from the fifth century BC onwards in the ideology of Greek superiority to barbarians, which I shall discuss in more detail below.

Some mythical characters have a more immediately adaptable appearance than others. We have, for example, seen that, certainly by the fifth century BC, Dionysus and his Satyrs are roaming Italy.⁵⁵ Satyrs are traditionally found in wild, sylvan settings: in literature and art, they are set in a landscape of mountains, trees, and caves, uninhabited by human beings.⁵⁶ Dionysus is a god readily associated with exotic, foreign origins.⁵⁷ It is, then, tempting to suppose that Italy first came to be identified as a landscape roamed by Satyrs and Dionysus because of the wild, exotic, faraway aura it had first acquired in earlier times of colonization, and which it seems to some extent to have retained well into the classical period. But scenes of Dionysus and his Satyrs are also enormously popular in south Italian pottery, some of it found in a 'native' setting.⁵⁸ How are we to read such scenes? The most probable explanation is that local Italian élites found Dionysus and his Satyrs in wild abandon suitable symbols of aristocratic entertainment, as Greek élites clearly also did.⁵⁹ There is

⁵³ Cato *Orig.* 3. 4, 'eo Orestem cum Iphigenia atque Pylade dicunt maternam necem expiatum venisse, et non longinqua memoria est, cum in arbore ense viderint, quem Orestes abiens reliquisse dicitur.' ('There they say Orestes came with Iphigenia and Pylades to expiate the murder of his mother, and within recent memory they could see in a tree the sword which Orestes is said to have left when he went away.')

⁵⁴ For a fascinating discussion of uses of mythical family-trees by Italian local élites, see T. P. Wiseman, 'Domi Nobiles and the Roman Cultural Élite', in *Bourgeoisies* (1983), 299 ff.

⁵⁵ Cf. n. 12 above.

⁵⁶ See e.g. Hor. *AP* 244; Vitruvius *Arch.* 5. 6. 9, 7. 2. 5; Ovid *Fasti* 1. 401-4; 2. 315 ff., 3. 295-8; Plut. *Sulla* 27. 2; *Numa* 15. 3.

⁵⁷ Cf. n. 33 above.

⁵⁸ See e.g. A. Pontrandolfo Greco, *I Lucani* (Milan, 1982), 102 for the presence together of locally produced and modest Attic vases in the native necropolis of Sala Consilina in the Vallo di Diano around 470 BC.

⁵⁹ For Dionysus and Ariadne in the context of Greek drinking-parties, see Xenophon, *Symp.* 9. 2-7, where dancers represent them. For *symposia* in the context of élite society in archaic and classical Greece, see O. Murray, *Early Greece* (Glasgow, 1980), 80, 197-203.

obviously no need here to suppose that they were advertising their peculiar exoticism and un-Greek wildness!

So far, I have been discussing how a particular myth could be taken up subsequently by the native people on whom it was originally projected in what appears to have been initially a one-way process. At times, however, there are hints of the collaboration of both Greeks and non-Greeks in the actual process of myth-making, or, to be more cautious, at least the 'natives' are attributed some sort of 'say' in the process. A striking example of this phenomenon is the story attributed by Dionysius of Halicarnassus to the fifth-century writer Hellanicus of Lesbos, which I have already outlined in the introduction. The local name for Herakles' bull-calf, *outoulos*, after which *outoulia* will take its name,⁶⁰ certainly works in 'Italic' languages such as Latin and Oscan. The implications of this notice are exciting: the etymology of a name of a geographical area is woven from a story that makes sense within Greek traditions of the wanderings of Herakles, and which uses a plausible 'Italic' word, dramatizing cultural interaction. This version is also interesting because various other explanations were eventually given for the etymology of the name. For Timaeus, Italia derives rather from *italos*, which is, he claims, an ancient Greek word for 'bull'.⁶¹ Here, apparently, is a more 'Bickermanesque' Greek at work, eager at all costs to impose Greek origins and etymologies. It is not clear when Hellanicus' version originated, or even whether it originated in a Greek, native, or 'mixed' environment. The fact that Hellanicus apparently referred to it at all suggests that Greeks were not always and in all contexts 'Bickermanesque'. It is the possibility that attitudes towards non-Greeks shifted at various times that I want to consider next.

2. GREEKS AND BARBARIANS

Iurarunt inter se barbaros necare omnes medicina, et hoc ipsum mercede faciunt ut fides is sit et facile disperdant. nos quoque dictitant barbaros et spurcius nos quam alios Opicon appellatione foedant.⁶²

⁶⁰ D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 35 = Hellanicus *FGH* 4, F 111.

⁶¹ Timaeus *FGH* 566, F 42b = Varro *RR* 2. 5. 3; cf. Timaeus *FGH* 566 F 42a = Gellius *NA* 2. 1. 1.

⁶² Pliny *NH* 29. 14, quoting Cato's advice about Greeks to his son Marcus.

They have sworn amongst themselves to kill all barbarians with their medicine, and they do this for money so that people are taken in, and they may do away with them easily. They also call us barbarians, and sling more mud on us than on others by calling us Opikoi.

The theme of Greeks versus barbarians is of great importance in the later Roman Republic. As Rome's influence in peninsular Italy and well beyond is extended through victory over Pyrrhus, annexation of Sabine and Vestine territory, victory in the Hannibalic war, and, most recently, imperialistic ventures in 'old' Greece, she increasingly promotes herself as a Greek city, with epic narratives to proclaim her remote and recent history, and extensive rebuilding to transform her physical aspect as well. Her self-proclamation, not always favourably received by the Greeks,⁶³ has consequences for Roman ideological treatment of other Italian peoples: they become the barbarians in the Roman scheme. For example, as we shall see, Livy's Samnites are relatively complex barbarians: as *montani atque agrestes*, they fall short of the ideal of civilization without decadence, and elsewhere, in their gold and silver armour, they highlight by contrast the manliness and austerity of Roman soldiers.⁶⁴ This Roman discourse is built on the earlier Greek discourse of barbarian Italians, and it is the development of this theme that I shall trace here.

Recent studies have shown admirably that the Greek/barbarian polarity has a specific social and historical context, and, in its developed and most marked form, is to be related to the aftermath of the Persian wars of the early fifth century BC. The sharpness of the polarity during the century after Marathon has its origins in the out-and-out enmity of the Persian wars, and, in the century after Marathon, is developed in the course of Athenian political self-definition and self-advertisement.⁶⁵ In the western Greek world, appeal could be made to the Greek/barbarian dichotomy, particularly at times when the Greek cities felt themselves to be under pressure from Oscan-speakers or Romans. At best, the Greeks could laugh at the ridiculous dress and stumbling Greek of barbarians;⁶⁶ at worst, they would complain of bad faith and the loss of language and customs. As the

⁶³ See e.g. Dionysius' apologia for Rome, *Ant. Rom.* 1. 4; cf. Badian, 'The Early Historians', 2-7 for Fabius Pictor's audience.

⁶⁴ Livy 9. 13. 7 for pre-civilized Samnites; Livy 10. 38. 5 ff.; 10. 39. 16 for flashy Samnites.

⁶⁵ Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, esp. ch. 2.

⁶⁶ For the Tarentines' reaction to Postumius' embassy in 282 BC, see Appian, *Samn.* 7; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 19. 5. 1-5; Val. Max. 2. 2. 5.

concept of Greek superiority over barbarians was developed, it was taken over by the 'barbarians' themselves: this is illustrated by the fact that non-Greeks chose to proclaim themselves as Greek, whether by being formally recognized as a Greek city as was Bruttian Petelia during the second century BC,⁶⁷ or by emphasizing 'proofs' of Greek origins as did the Thesunti Tauriani.⁶⁸ The prestige associated with belonging to the Greek world was surely increased. At this point, even the less favourable of localized Greek myths are likely to have increased in value, as non-Greeks chose to promote their Greekness.

In some cases philhellene credentials made political sense amongst barbarian peoples. Greeks themselves could play up the philhellene credentials of barbarians, attributing to them Greek origins and customs. The Greek/barbarian dichotomy conveniently did not exclude the possibility that Greekness could be given when it made good sense to make friends with barbarian powers. The existence of this possibility neatly illustrates the nature of ancient ethnocentrism, in which the conceptual boundaries were cultural. In this respect, ancient ethnocentrism is very different from the modern phenomenon of racism, in which belief in the existence of permanent, inherited, pseudo-biological categories means that it is very much more difficult to change category.⁶⁹

(a) Early Contacts

By the time of Herodotus, Greek interest in the idea of panhellenism is clearly displayed. Herodotus has, of course, an impressively complex notion of cultural identity: his discussion of Spartan customs suggests a considerable degree of diversity within the Greek city states, while non-Greek nations, like the Egyptians, share elements of Greek religion, despite their idiosyncrasies.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, Athens

⁶⁷ For Petelia as originally a Bruttian city, see Livy 23. 20; for unmistakably Oscan names for the two magistrates in the third to second centuries, and for that of the *theorodokos*, as well as the two gymnasiarchs attested for the second century BC, see Po. 201; Costabile, *Istituzioni*, 67; Manganaro, 'Città di Sicilia', 419 ff.; *IG* 14. 637.

⁶⁸ Cato, *Orig.* 3, 4 (Chass.). If Cato's *Thesunti Tauriani* can be identified with the stamp *taurianoun* (Po. 191), then we have an Oscan-speaking people heavily influenced by Greek models for the formation of the place-name: see P. Poccetti, *Per un'identità culturale dei Brettii* (Naples, 1988), 119–20 for a discussion of this point.

⁶⁹ For a discussion of the differences between racism and ethnocentrism, see L. Thompson, *Romans and Blacks* (London, 1989), 12–20.

⁷⁰ Herod. 6. 56–60 for the remarkable rights of Spartan kings, and practices of Spartans in general; Book 2, *passim*, for Egyptians.

ultimately is made to portray herself as the saviour of the 'Greek' way of life when she refuses Mardonius' offer of an alliance with Persia: she will not betray the 'Greek nation—the community of blood and language, temples and ritual; our common way of life'.⁷¹ Herodotus' perception of the westward expansion of the Persian Empire in terms of a common threat to Greek city-states makes a convincing background for the earliest assertion of Greek 'nationalism', and we should be very wary of reading this notion of Greek 'national identity' back into the eighth- to sixth-century western colonies.⁷²

Nevertheless, concrete links between individual mother-cities and colonies were clearly perceived to be important in this earlier period, and some similarities between Greek states in the expression of this relationship may be observed. For example, we find occasional reference (particularly regarding Athenian colonies) to the transferral of sacred fire from the public hearth of the mother-city to the colony, suggesting that the colony was, to some extent, to be considered a continuation of the mother-city.⁷³ Other elements might be transferred, such as the mother-city's calendar or tribal names.⁷⁴ A sense of common ancestry might also be celebrated in the rituals and institutions of sister-colonies: Hermocrates' speech to the Sicilian delegates, set by Thucydides in 424, implies that, at least by this time, communities might well be induced to act on being either 'Ionian' or 'Dorian'.⁷⁵ Over and above this, there does seem to have been some consciousness of shared religious practices, particularly centred around Delphi. For example, according to Thucydides, at the sanctuary of Apollo Archegetes at Naxos on Sicily, visitors to the Greek games first sacrificed when leaving Sicily, presumably an acknowledgement on the part of all Greeks in Sicily of the position of Naxos as the first Sicilian colony.⁷⁶ Delphic motifs are also common in the coinage of the western Greeks, suggesting that

⁷¹ Herod. 8. 144.

⁷² Malkin, *Religion and Colonization*, 2, uses the Herodotus passage in the context of a discussion of 'religious practices common to all Greeks when founding colonies'. The distinction between the existence of practices which might be 'objectively' observed to be common to all Greeks, and Greek consciousness of 'national identity' should be more carefully drawn.

⁷³ Evidence collected and discussed by Malkin, *ibid.* 115 ff.

⁷⁴ e.g. *phratriai* of Neapolis continue names of gods or heroes of Euboea and environs: Frederiksen, *Campania*, 54, 93.

⁷⁵ Thuc. 4. 61. 4.

⁷⁶ 6. 3. 1.

expression of the connection with Delphi continued to be important.⁷⁷

The expression of identity in the western Greek colonies was not, however, limited to expression of links with 'Old Greece'. For example, the person of the founder himself might serve as a focus for the colony. After all, in some cases, colonists, like the members of the abortive expedition led by Dorieus, had apparently set out, or been sent out, following social and political troubles within the mother-city.⁷⁸ In such cases the founder-cult might have served to forge an identity for the colony which was separable from that of the mother-city. Even if the colony had not left home in such vexed circumstances, the founder-cult could unite colonists from different Greek cities as well as non-Greek elements: the indigenous peoples who were incorporated within, or who married into, the foreign community. And lastly, but not to be neglected, there are the non-Greek elements adopted into the ritual of the new community. For example, Polybius, in his discussion of the versions of Aristotle and Timaeus on the early history of Locri, has the Locrians somewhat desperately having to adopt various native Sicilian rites, apparently still observable in contemporary ritual, 'because they had no inherited ritual'.⁷⁹ One might well wonder whether the colonists felt this to be such a counsel of despair, or whether it was felt to be a good idea to incorporate the worship of the gods of the local peoples, rather than to antagonize them by neglecting the rituals which they had come to expect.⁸⁰ While, as we have seen, parallels with more recent colonial ventures are sometimes suggestive in discussions of how colonists see native peoples and their lands, it is important also to emphasize that early Greek colonists were not Christians. The ability of the Greek colonists to incorporate new religious elements means that very much

⁷⁷ Malkin, *Religion and Colonization*, 24. If Plut. *Arist.* 20. 4–5 is historical, Delphi had an important role to play after the victory at Platea in 479 bc, in the strengthening of panhellenic consciousness through religious ritual. The Delphic oracle instructed Greeks to set up an altar to Zeus Soter. Before sacrifices could be made on it, all fires throughout the land which had been polluted by barbarians were to be relit with fire 'fresh and pure from the common hearth at Delphi'.

⁷⁸ A point well made in Malkin, *Religion and Colonization*, esp. 13.

⁷⁹ 12. 5.

⁸⁰ cf. Aeneas' pious respect for the *genium . . . loci* on his arrival in Italy: Virgil *Aen.* 7. 136.

more flexible relationships between colonists and native peoples were possible.⁸¹

Evidence of very varied relations between Greeks and natives at this early period should prevent us from trying to impose a schematic clash between Greeks and barbarians. Certainly, there are examples of a native people held in a subject position by the Greek newcomers: Syracuse, for example, has in historical times a slave-group called by Herodotus the *Cyllyrii*;⁸² the name seems to suggest an ethnic group, perhaps conquered and held in subjection in the early history of the Greek colony. In other cases, however, the presumption of any kind of clash at all would not seem to be a helpful starting-point. For example, early tombs at Pithecusae suggest that these early settlers took local wives, and displayed no alarm at all at the supposedly obvious 'vulgarity' of local taste in vase-painting and in luxury goods.⁸³ Elsewhere, settlers and locals seem to have coexisted, apparently peaceably, rather than cohabited. For example, excavation of a cemetery at Francavilla Marittima, on the edge of the plain of the ancient site of Sybaris, suggests that locals continued to live (and die) close to the Greek site right into the sixth century, their grave goods becoming gradually less and less easy to distinguish from Greek ones.⁸⁴ Presumably, they acquired these goods through exchanging perishable goods such as animal products.⁸⁵

It is surely reciprocal relations of these latter kinds that are the

⁸¹ For the particular effect of missionizing Christian colonists, see e.g. G. H. Anderson, 'The Philippines: Reluctant Beneficiary of the Missionary Impulse in Europe', in Chiappelli *et al.*, *First Images of America*, i. 400. The author highlights the one-way process of Christianizing the locals by drawing attention to two perennial problems of the Catholic Church in the Philippines: nominal membership and the persistence of pre-Christian elements on the one hand, and the difficulty of finding local clergy on the other. For a more general account of Christianizing colonists, see, L. Hanke, 'The Theological Significance of the Discovery of America', in the same volume, 363 ff.

⁸² Herod. 7. 155.

⁸³ See G. Buchner, 'Early Orientalizing: Aspects of the Euboean Connection', in D. Ridgway and F. R. Ridgway (eds.), *Italy before the Romans* (London, 1979), esp. 133 for ornate Etruscan goods in tombs of males buried entirely Greek-style in Pithecusae and Cumae; for the idea of mixed marriages, see 135, 'most, if not all, of the colonists' women were not Greeks but natives'. For a traditional view of Etruscan taste, see J. Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas* (London, 1980), 199.

⁸⁴ See J. Heurgon, *The Rise of Rome to 264 bc* (London, 1973), 90; cf. Pontrandolfo Greco, *I Lucani*, 93 ff. for a survey of relations between the Greek cities of the coast and the native settlements inland during the fifth century bc, which she sees as a time of profound (but non-violent) change for the native peoples; cf. Whitehouse and Wilkins, 'Greeks and Natives', for a methodologically excellent assessment of culture change.

⁸⁵ Cf. n. 11 above.

background to some of the varieties of myth-making which we have observed above. The particularly close relationships between Greeks and non-Greeks at Pithecusae make a good background for the keen interest in localizing myth and in making use of it in local contexts that is a feature of central Tyrrhenian Italy. In the case of the Etruscans, despite their interest in myth, it seems that Greeks were content to impose upon them their own ideas about their origins, and it is surprising and striking that the Etruscans were apparently still something of a mystery to the Greeks by the fifth century BC. But Greeks did not always remain so ignorant of the locals. The Hellanicus story about Herakles and the etymology of Italy suggests a two-way process in the localization of myth, while the story of the Locrian ritual implies that some more profound exchange of ideas was a possibility. How exactly Greeks and non-Greeks might have conversed is an interesting question, and hard to determine. Complaints about damage done to the Greek language through barbarian influence belong to a later era, and are related to the cities which were 'Oscanized' from the fifth century.⁸⁶ But some native peoples apparently spoke Greek: the Bruttians were *bilingues* according to second-century BC Latin authors, implying, presumably, that they spoke both Greek and Oscan.⁸⁷

(b) *The Arrival of the Barbarians*

We have seen how Herodotus makes panhellenic sentiments come to the fore against the background of the Persian wars. It is worth noting also that the abstract concept of the development of 'national' identity through a sense of a common enemy (the barbarian) was understood in antiquity; Polybius links together in a sequence the traditions of Persians in Greece, Gauls in Delphi and his own account of the Gallic wars in Italy, in which Romans are cast in the role of the protectors of Hellenism.⁸⁸ It is interesting quite how quickly and how extensively this notion of common Greek identity seems to have spread. If links

⁸⁶ e.g. Aristoxenus fr. 124 Wehrli(2) = Athenaeus 14. 632a; Wilamowitz' deletion of *e Rhomaiois* is not decisive, as *Turrenois* is surely no odder here; cf. Strabo 5. 4. 7 = 246 C on finding 'Campanian' names in the Neapolitan demarch-lists, but contrast statements in the same chapter about the persistence of Greek institutions in the city in the Roman period, as well as a highly respectable four-yearly festival rivalling others in the Greek world.

⁸⁷ Enn., *Ann.* 477 (Sk.) = Festus p. 31 L.; Lucilius 1124 M.

⁸⁸ Polybius 2. 35, with F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (Oxford, 1957), i, ad loc.

between mother-city and colony, and indeed, links between the various colonies and Delphi, were preserved in the rituals and institutions of the colony as well as in the tales of the colony's foundation, such links could also come in handy for those left behind in 'old' Greece. For example, Greek envoys are apparently received by Gelon of Syracuse before the battle of Salamis.⁸⁹ Whatever one might think of the dramatic interchange attributed by Herodotus to this occasion, it remains very interesting that, at least by the time when he was writing his history, there was a 'Sicilian' tradition which synchronized the battle of Salamis with the victory of Gelon and Theron at Himera over Hamilcar of Carthage.⁹⁰

It is a small step from the synchronization of battles to a sense of 'common cause', and, indeed of a common enemy: it seems fair to see here the roots of the generalized Greek/barbarian dichotomy in its developed form. We can, in fact, trace this tradition back to Pindar's celebration of Hieron's victory in the chariot-race at Delphi in 470.⁹¹ This occasional poem is a reminder of another way in which a sense of panhellenism might be increasingly encouraged: games and a festival in which representatives from distant Greek states participated might serve to emphasize things in common, such as language and common cult-centres (that of Apollo at Delphi, for example), now underlined by the beginnings of a sense of common history. Close links between Greece and Sicily are further emphasized around this time by a piece of pseudo-science later dressed up in a mythological wrapping: from Pindar we learn too that the river Alpheios re-emerges in Syracusan Ortygia, having run under the sea from the Peloponnese. Timaeus' version is similar, if slightly more colourful: his 'proof' of the theory that Syracusan Arethusa has as its source the Alpheios is the emergence in the Arethusa of dung from Olympian sacrificial beasts, and even a golden bowl, after heavy rains at Olympia.⁹²

Once the sense of a common identity has begun to be developed, individual incidents involving a Greek city and a non-Greek people may become portrayed in a more schematic way. It is obviously important nevertheless not to overdo this schematism: rivalries and friction between Greek states continued, and non-Greek forces could be useful to one or both states in the ensuing struggle. For example, 'barbarian' forces, such as the Mamertini employed by Syracuse,

⁸⁹ Herod. 7. 153 ff.

⁹⁰ Herod. 7. 166.

⁹¹ Pindar *Pyth.* 1. 72 ff.

⁹² Pindar *Nem.* 1, cf. Timaeus *FGH* 566, F 41b = Polyb. 12. 4d.

were extensively called upon in Sicily.⁹³ However, by the mid-fourth century BC, anxiety about the loss of 'Greek' identity through 'contamination' by foreign elements is apparent in a variety of sources, not least because recent history has seen the actual political take-over of a Greek city like Posidonia by Oscan-speaking people: the perceived threat from the foreigner opposed on every front to the Greek has become realized in action. In the Platonic *Epistle* 8, the salvation of Sicily's Greekness—represented in particular by the language—is a matter of desperate concern for all Greeks: the risk is that it will be taken over by Phoenicians or Opikoi.⁹⁴ The importance of Greek independence has more immediate meaning when actual foreign take-overs can be seen.

At the end of the fourth century, Aristoxenos of Tarentum is expressing concern about the barbarism of Paestum: he has a sad story of Greeks meeting here once a year for a festival, to recall their glorious past, their language and customs now changed by the arrival of 'Tyrrhenians or Romans'. The confusion here is interesting, and particularly so if the phrase 'or Romans' is not an interpolation: this fragment predates the Latin colony by around a century.⁹⁵ While early Etruscan presence around Salerno is well documented, it is, in fact, hard to see how 'Etruscans' in any strict sense should have been the objects of especial concern at the end of the fourth century BC, when Samnite presence would surely have been the most remarkable. I would suggest rather that this fragment of Aristoxenos reflects a lack of concern in distinguishing accurately between different varieties of Italian barbarians, an attitude which is a familiar feature of modern western ethnocentrism as well.⁹⁶ Greek writers certainly had a variety of names at their disposal to describe different Italian peoples by the fourth century, and the question of whether or not Italian peoples ever called themselves by any of these names is not strictly relevant here.⁹⁷ At one level, it looks as if Oscan-speaking peoples were looming large

⁹³ Polyb. 1. 7, cf. 4. 3. 2, with Walbank, *Polybius*, i, ad loc.; cf. Frederiksen, *Campania*, 144.

⁹⁴ *Ep.* 8. 353e; questions about whether or not this is an authentic letter of Plato himself are not really relevant here.

⁹⁵ fr. 124 Wehrli(2) = Athenaeus 14. 632a; for a discussion of some of the problems raised by this passage, see F. Sartori, 'Le città italiote dopo la conquista romana', *La Magna Grecia nell'età romana (atti del quindicesimo convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto, 5-10 ottobre 1975)* (Naples, 1976), 86.

⁹⁶ See e.g. M. Banton, *Racial Consciousness* (London, 1988), 3.

⁹⁷ See Ch. 5 below.

in Greek imaginations by the latter part of the fifth century BC: Thucydides imagines that a vast area of southern Italy was occupied by Opikoi in prehistoric times, and that these people succeeded in pushing the Sicilian people over the Strait to Sicily.⁹⁸ Given the variety of different ethnic names which could be attributed to the peoples of prehistoric southern Italy, and given that Opikoi was used by Greeks to describe—in a decidedly unflattering manner—historical Italian peoples,⁹⁹ it is tempting to suppose that Thucydides is projecting back into prehistory contemporary pressure on the Greek cities from Oscan-speaking peoples. But ‘Tyrrhenians’ had undoubtedly figured more prominently and for longer in the Greek imagination than had any other Italian peoples, and Aristoxenos may be resorting to an ethnocentric ‘part for the whole’ allocation.¹⁰⁰

3. MAKING A VIRTUE OUT OF NECESSITY: THE TARENTINE VERSION

From the time of Cato onwards, there is visible Roman interest in an idealized Sparta, to which Rome may favourably be compared, and which, most importantly, may also be located outside Rome, amongst the Sabines or ‘Sabelli’. In Cato, the first observable signs of the highly important Roman discourse of Italian austerity may be seen.¹⁰¹ The idea of eastern Italians as Spartan colonists is considerably older, however, and must be traced back to the relations between Tarentum and Samnium in the latter part of the fourth century BC. Strabo has the fullest account, and the biggest clue about the origin of this tradition:

Some say, moreover, that a colony of Laconians joined the Samnites, and that for this reason the Samnites actually became philhellenes, and that some of them were even called ‘Pitanates’. But it is thought that the Tarentines simply fabricated this, to flatter, and at the same time to win the friendship of, a powerful people on their borders; because once upon a time, the Samnites used to send out an army of as many as eighty thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry.¹⁰²

The most likely background for such an ‘invention’ is the friendly relations between Tarentum and the Samnites in the 330–320s BC:¹⁰³

⁹⁸ 6. 2. ⁹⁹ e.g. Pliny *NH* 29. 14. ¹⁰⁰ Cf. n. 95 above.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Ch. 2, s. 4 below. ¹⁰² 5. 4. 12 = p. 250 C.

¹⁰³ For discussion of the date of the Tarentine turnaround, see Frederiksen, *Campania*, 208.

it is hard to see what the Tarentines would have stood to gain from such an 'invention' at any other time. To some extent, the fiction of Spartan ancestry for the 'Samnites' may be explained by the desire to express kinship between two Spartan colonies, Tarentum and the Samnites, as a background to combined action.¹⁰⁴ On another level, however, the development of the Greek/barbarian dichotomy, and anxiety about the 'barbarization' of Greek cities such as Posidonia/Paestum surely increased the need to portray foreign friends as 'real' Greeks.

Additionally, there are in the sources traces of an ideological competition between Samnium and Rome at precisely this time, the issue being who had the better philhellenic credentials. The issue comes to a head over Naples in 327 bc. Frederiksen argued convincingly that the scene at Naples described by Dionysius of Halicarnassus originated in a Greek source, contemporary or nearly contemporary with the events related.¹⁰⁵ In this scene, there takes place a debate before the Neapolitans in which the Romans and the Samnites give reasons for making an alliance with them. Certainly the method employed by the Samnites in order to get themselves an audience directly with the public assembly is rather dubious: when most of the *χαριέστατοι* ('most enlightened') are in favour of making an alliance with Rome, they bribe the *boule* ('council') to let the *demos* ('people') decide on the policy of Neapolis. What they say they have to offer the Neapolitans remains interesting, however, and suggests that the Greek source for this debate was by no means entirely pro-Roman and anti-Samnite. If Rome has suggested to the Neapolitans that an alliance with the Samnites does not befit them as Greeks, the Samnites might be understood to offer better protection of Greekness than Rome at this point. They promise manpower to the Neapolitans, and assure them that Cumae will be restored to Greek hands, along with some of the land presently held by Campanians. These offers are contrasted with the depiction of Rome as faithless and treacherous.

I see no reason to doubt that, by the later part of the fourth century bc, the Samnites had as much of an idea of Greek public opinion as did the Romans, and were no more disingenuous than the Romans in

¹⁰⁴ For recent assertion of close links of Taras with Sparta around the time of Archidamus' expedition, see P. Wuilleumier, *Tarente* (Paris, 1939), 78–9.

¹⁰⁵ D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 15. 5 ff.; cf. Frederiksen, *Campania*, 201 ff.

their desire to exploit this knowledge. By this time, direct contacts between the Samnites and the Greek cities of the south may be seen to have had a military context in particular. The statue of Athena found at Roccapromonte near Boiano in Samnium, possibly a copy of a fifth-century Attic statue, with an Oscan dedicatory inscription transcribed when the statue was discovered, but now unfortunately lost, is generally interpreted as war-booty, because there is nothing that compares closely with it in the area.¹⁰⁶ At the Samnite cult-centre of Pietrabbondante, a collection of helmets of Tarentine production was found, dating from the late fifth to the first half of the fourth centuries BC. This collection is probably best interpreted as *spolia hostium*, suggesting relations between Tarentum and the Samnites which are not reported in the literary sources.¹⁰⁷

The evidence discussed so far might suggest hostility rather than friendship, but other evidence seems to tell a different story. A helmet of unknown provenance was dedicated in a Graeco-Lucanian alphabet, 'spedis mamerekies saipins anafaket', 'Spedis Mamerekies of Saepinum dedicated this'.¹⁰⁸ The Saepinate dedicator was presumably active in the south of Italy: this would be the most straightforward inference to draw from the alphabet of the inscription.¹⁰⁹ The dedicator was most probably a mercenary, perhaps working on an individual basis. The use of Samnite mercenaries by the Greek cities of southern Italy might provide a context for dealings of a very positive kind between Greeks and Samnites: such dealings might well be the background to the incident at Neapolis in 327 BC. Positive relations of this kind provide a counterbalance to the Mamertini, whose actions were clearly notorious by the second century BC. These Mamertini, whose ethnicity is not entirely clear, but who were either Samnites or Campanians, were mercenaries enlisted by Agathocles. On his death, in the 280s BC, they seized Messina.¹¹⁰

This was not the whole story, however. What is very interesting is that a favourable version of the mission of the Mamertini to Sicily was also in circulation. According to Alfius, who is cited by Festus, the

¹⁰⁶ Salmon, *Samnium*, 128; Ve. 158.

¹⁰⁷ D'Agostino, *Sannio* (1980), 130 ff.; cf. A. La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali nel mondo sannitico', in *Sannio* (1984), 11 ff.

¹⁰⁸ Ve. 190.

¹⁰⁹ La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 23.

¹¹⁰ Polyb. 1. 7. 3 ff.; for Polybius, these mercenaries of Agathocles were, like Decius' band at Rhegium, *Campanoi*, while for Alfius (Festus 105 L.) the Mamertini apparently originated in Samnium. Polybius may be drawing too close parallels between the situation of the Mamertini and that of Decius' Campanians at Rhegium.

Mamertini were not only invited in by the Messanians, in return for the help they had given to the Messanians in a war, but also came to Sicily in the first place as a result of a *ver sacrum* ordered by Apollo.¹¹¹ Very little is known about Alfius, author of a work on 'The Carthaginian War', but his Oscan name may be significant, and may help to explain this very favourable version of the actions of the Mamertini.¹¹² Costabile suggests that Apollo's guidance of the Mamertini (instead of Mars, the god traditionally associated with Sacred Springs, and on whose name that of the Mamertini is explicitly said to be based) may be closely influenced by a version of the foundation story of Rhegium, in which famine-stricken Chalcidians are guided by Apollo to the site of Rhegium.¹¹³ Whether or not this is the case, the substitution of Apollo for Mars remains interesting: the Mamertine take-over would be sanctioned by Apollo, increasingly to be identified as the protector of Hellenism, as well as being, in the form of Apollo Archegetes, the god to whom sacrifice must be made at this altar at Naxos by those claiming to be a Greek community in Sicily.¹¹⁴ The commitment of the Mamertini to Apollo is illustrated elsewhere: an Oscan building-inscription at Messana has the *meddices* (Oscan magistrates), together with the *touto Mamertino* ('Mamertine people') overseeing the construction or the reconstruction of a temple to Apollo. Furthermore, new issues of coinage of the Mamertini around 220 bc also display images of Apollo, featuring not least the tripod and *omphalos* which are connected with his Delphic role.¹¹⁵ Evidence of this kind is very suggestive, in that it shows that the Romans were by no means the only Italian people capable of attempting to manipulate Greek sentiment. It is perfectly possible that ideological weapons had a role on both sides in the conflict between Rome and the Samnites, and that Tarentine and Samnite interests could have coincided in the invention of a Spartan ancestry for the Samnites.

So far, I have concentrated on expressions of kinship in the Tarentine fiction: the Samnites as Spartan colonists like the Tarentines, or the Samnites as true Greeks rather than barbarians. But it is very probable that, in addition, the Tarentine fiction had a moral dimension. Idealized Sparta has a long history in Greek thought. According to Tigerstedt, the roots of idealized Sparta are to be found

¹¹¹ Festus 150 L. ¹¹² Salmon, *Samnum*, 124 with n. 4.

¹¹³ Costabile, *Istituzioni*, 57. ¹¹⁴ Thuc. 6. 3. 1.

¹¹⁵ Ve. 196; Costabile, *Istituzioni*, 53.

in a Spartan context, addressed by Tyrtæus to the Spartans themselves. This ideology was arguably increasingly directed towards other states of the Peloponnesus as Sparta gained the upper hand in the course of the sixth century.¹¹⁶ During the Persian Wars, the promotion of Spartan austerity, orderliness and internal political tranquillity, of a naïvety which is connected with getting down to business without making a fuss, is surely to be tied up with Spartan bids for the leadership of other Greek states on land and on sea.¹¹⁷ During the course of the fifth century, the ideological polarity between Sparta and Athens is emphasized by the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, and Sparta becomes increasingly an anti-Athens, with political and moral dimensions.¹¹⁸ Anxiety about the political, social, and moral consequences of empire increases amongst the Athenian élite during the Peloponnesian War, and such anxiety seems justified by Spartan victory.¹¹⁹ By the mid-fourth century, Isocrates can observe that Sparta too has met with her come-uppance at Leuctra, and can observe that imperialist ventures have exposed Sparta to the same dangers as Athens. The austerity, orderliness and self-discipline for which the Spartans had been famous had now been replaced by greed, lawlessness, and licentiousness.¹²⁰ A now dead Sparta continues to be praised none the less, appearing increasingly in philosophical treatises.¹²¹

Thus Sparta has such moral weight by the late fourth century that it is hard to imagine that the Tarentine fiction of Spartan involvement in the origins of the Samnites was without a moral dimension. Certainly, later authors attributed to Samnites and Lucanians various ethnographic details which are reminiscent of idealized Sparta. For Strabo, the Samnite marriage-custom whereby the *aristoi* ('best') youths are paired up with the *aristai* girls is one conducive to *areté* ('virtue'),¹²² while for Justin the Lucanians have followed admirable Spartan principles in educating their young.¹²³ It is also interesting that Aristotle attributes to the Oenotri, the supposed prehistoric ancestors of southern Italians, the institution of *syssitia*, the Spartan mess-system much praised by ancient authors for its moral worth.¹²⁴

¹¹⁶ Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta*, i. 44 ff.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 79 ff.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 113 ff.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 156 ff.

¹²⁰ *Areopagiticus* 7, cf. Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta*, i. 185 ff.

¹²¹ Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta*, i. 228 ff.

¹²² 5. 4. 12 = p. 250 C.

¹²³ Pomp. Trog. ep. Just. 23. 1. 3-7.

¹²⁴ *Ar. Pol.* 7. 10. 1329b; cf. *Xen. Lac. Pol.* 5. 4-7 for the moral and social worth of *syssitia*.

Sabines too are attributed 'Spartan' features such as a warlike character, austerity, and *disciplina*.¹²⁵ The Lucanians (and their supposed ancestors, the Oenotri) are no surprise here: I shall argue below that they actually classed themselves, and could thus be legitimately classed, as 'Samnites' in the fourth century.¹²⁶ The Sabines are rather more problematic, but it is possible that they were included in the Tarentine package as the Samnites' ancestors:¹²⁷ in the context of fourth-century confrontation with Rome, the more peoples that could conveniently be linked in by tales of kinship to Tarentum, the better.

In addition, D'Agostino and Mele have drawn some interesting conclusions about the moral symbolism of a strange story which appears in Cicero's *De Senectute*.¹²⁸ Cicero makes Cato claim to have got from his Tarentine host Nearchus the story of an encounter in the presence of Plato between the Pythagorean Archytas of Tarentum and the Caudine Pontius Herennius, described as father of the general Gaius Pontius Telesinus, who led the Samnites against Rome at the battle of the Caudine Forks in 321 bc. On this occasion, apparently, Archytas was discussing the role of *voluptates* ('pleasures') in detracting from *virtus* and *temperantia*, and as the cause of the fall of states as well as private ruin.¹²⁹ Archytas was apparently famous for such speeches: in Aristoxenos of Tarentum's biography of Archytas as related by Athenaeus, Archytas is again denouncing pleasure, but this time he has an opponent, Polyarchus, who is defending pleasure. There is clearly a political dimension to this version of the dialogue, and, on one level at least, we have a moderate, reasonable Tarentum versus a hedonistic, *tryphé* ('deca-

¹²⁵ e.g. Serv. Auct. *ad Verg. Aen.* 8, 638; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 2. 49. 5.

¹²⁶ Ch. 5, s. 5 below.

¹²⁷ Cf. Strabo 5. 4. 12 = p. 250 C for the supposed Sabine origins of the Samnites.

¹²⁸ Cic. *De Senectute* 41, 'haec cum C. Pontio Samnite, patre eius, a quo Caudino proelio Sp. Postumius T. Veturius consules superati sunt, locutum Archytam Nearchus Tarentinus hospes noster, qui in amicitia populi Romani permanserat, se a maioribus natu accepisse dicebat, cum quidem ei sermoni interfuisset Plato Atheniensis, quem Tarentum venisse L. Camillo Ap. Claudio consulibus reperio.' ('Nearchus of Tarentum, our host, who had remained in the friendship of the Roman people, said that he had heard from older people that Archytas discussed these matters with Gaius Pontius the Samnite, the father of the man by whom the consuls Spurius Postumius and Titus Veturius were beaten at the Battle of Caudium, when Plato the Athenian was also present at the debate: Plato, I find, came to Tarentum when L. Camillus and Appius Claudius were consuls.') cf. B. D'Agostino, '*Voluptas et Virtus*: il mito politico della "ingenuità italica"', *AION(Arch.)* 3 (1981), 117 ff.; A. Mele, 'Il pitagorismo e le popolazioni anelleniche d'Italia', *AION(Arch.)* 3 (1981), 61 ff.

¹²⁹ *De Senectute* 39–41.

dence')-ridden Syracuse.¹³⁰ An opposition of this kind can hardly be imagined between Cicero's characters, although it is possible, in view of interest elsewhere in the work in the moral opposition of Athens and Sparta, that Plato's Athenian quality is in some way significant, juxtaposed with the Tarentine/Spartan Archytas.¹³¹

The version which appears in Cicero is certainly strange, and has led some modern scholars to suppose that this is an example of Cicero's own handiwork.¹³² This will have to remain a possibility, but I shall try to show that there are good reasons to suppose that this story might have arisen in a Tarentine context. Giving a date to the meeting between Archytas, Plato and Pontius Herennius has its difficulties,¹³³ and some commentators have in addition been unnecessarily embarrassed by the appearance of a Samnite in any context which implies positive relations with any Greeks.¹³⁴ However, it is for my purpose quite irrelevant whether or not this meeting and debate actually took place. What is interesting is that such a story could be told, and the relevant question here is what might have been the context of such a story. Once again, I would suggest Tarentum in the 320s, when the Tarentines had good reason to want to present the Samnites in a favourable light: how better than to represent such a meeting of a Samnite leader with a great Italiot statesman and an Athenian philosopher?¹³⁵

To return to the position of Pontius Herennius within the encounter described in the *De Senectute*, it is worth noting that, elsewhere in the work, M'. Curius and Tiberius Coruncanius are attributed the desire that the Samnites and Pyrrhus would be converted to the side of Epicurus, the Athenian *sapiens* and advocate of *voluptas*: in that case, they could be easily beaten by the Romans.¹³⁶ The fact that the Samnites and Pyrrhus are such threats to Rome is therefore

¹³⁰ Aristoxenos fr. 50 Wehrli(2) = Athenaeus 12. 545a.

¹³¹ This is the suggestion of D'Agostino, '*Voluptas et Virtus*', 125.

¹³² For criticism of this view, see *ibid.* 122.

¹³³ For problems in dating the meeting, see Salmon, *Samnium*, 121 n. 3.

¹³⁴ Salmon, *Samnium*, 121 is not altogether comfortable with the idea, but gets around his anxiety by pointing out that Pontius is a Caudine: 'Pontius was an aristocrat of the Caudini, living close to Hellenic influences. Such a person might have acquired some taste for literature, but it by no means follows that his ruder fellows, the Samnites in general, had done so.' ¹³⁵ Cf. *ibid.* 121; D'Agostino, '*Voluptas et Virtus*'.

¹³⁶ 43; the story told at *De Senectute* 55–6 of M'. Curius Dentatus' *continentia* and *disciplina* when offered gold by the Samnites belongs to an alternative tradition according to which the Samnites are not good examples of frugality: see Ch. 2 s. 6 below.

presumably to be attributed to their lack of indulgence in *voluptates*, to the *virtus* and *temperantia* that are the antithesis of *voluptates*. It is, then, reasonable to attribute also to the figure of Pontius Herennius such overtones. Pontius Herennius crops up again in Livy's account of discussions of the Caudine Peace, giving wise counsel at an advanced age. There is a vivid account of his arrival on the battlefield in his *plaustrum* ('cart'), and Livy alludes to an older tradition concerning this episode.¹³⁷ The episode of the Caudine Forks is centred around Roman *hybris*, and is unavoidably favourable to the Samnites. Both these aspects work perfectly well in the context of a Roman source, but it remains tempting to take seriously Livy's allusion to an older tradition. Although it must be admitted that it is impossible to put a definite date to either of these stories, D'Agostino and Mele make the interesting suggestion that the figure of Pontius Herennius in the *De Senectute* and in Livy's narrative of the Samnite Wars symbolizes Italic *virtus* as constructed by Tarentine Pythagoreans. In particular, the Tarentines' use of Samnite manpower could be portrayed, as Mele suggests, in terms of Tarentine Spartans and their Samnite *peripoloi* ('special guard'), rather than in terms of the dependence on foreign mercenaries that was felt to be characteristic of *tryphé*.¹³⁸

There are indeed other stories of an outward-looking attitude displayed by the western Greeks towards non-Greeks, and these are particularly associated with Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans. Certainly, Tarentine and other Pythagoreans seem to have had no abiding principle of being friendly and welcoming towards barbarians, and were at times clearly on very bad terms with neighbouring peoples,¹³⁹ but there is some evidence to suggest that Pythagoreans were felt to be particularly able to make a virtue out of necessity when the need arose in the latter part of the fourth century. The role of Aristoxenos during this period is interesting in this context. Although he is attributed the account of the regrettable barbarization of Paestum,¹⁴⁰ he is elsewhere

¹³⁷ Livy 9. 1–15; 9. 3. 9 for *dicitur* with reference to Pontius Herennius' arrival in his cart.

¹³⁸ D'Agostino, '*Voluptas et Virtus*'.

¹³⁹ e.g. Willeumier, *Tarente*, 67 ff., for evidence of varying relationships between Tarentum and non-Greek peoples in the course of the fourth century; A. Adam, 'Remarques sur une série de bronze ou Tarente et les Barbares dans la deuxième moitié du IV s. av. J.-C.', *MEFRA* 94 (1982), 7 ff., for contemporary Tarentine ideology of Greeks against barbarians, cf. C. M. Kraay, *Archaic and Classical Greek Coins* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1976), 193 for the possibility that coins contemporary with Archytas depicting Herakles wrestling with the Nemean lion represent the struggle of civilized Greeks against barbarians.

¹⁴⁰ fr. 124 Wehrli(2) = Athenaeus 14. 632a.

represented as claiming the extensive influence of Pythagoras not only over the Italiot and Siceliot cities, but also over Italian peoples: Lucani, Messapi, Peucetii, and Romans came to him according to Aristoxenos, we are told.¹⁴¹ This is something of a turnaround, but understandable in the context of Tarentum's difficult position in the last decades of the fourth century. Aristoxenos' portrayal of Pythagoras' friendly relations with native peoples might reflect a desire to find in the past respectable precedents for present relations with Tarentum's neighbours.

4. TAKING IT UP

The Greek/barbarian dichotomy was constructed in a particular historical context. Under pressure, Greeks asserted their own superiority, but could also admit the Greekness of local peoples when this suited them. What did local peoples make of this Greek discourse? In my discussion of local uses of myth, I showed that early non-Greek assertion of connections with gods and heroes was regularly directed entirely towards a local situation. Adaptations of myth could be used to enhance the power and prestige of the local élite, or to ennoble local institutions. At this early stage, there is nothing to suggest that the world of myth is perceived as belonging to a foreign culture, and that appropriation of mythical motifs is therefore an assertion of relations with a foreign culture. At an early stage, we tend to see 'mainstream' myths of heroic deeds appropriated, along with practices that we would associate with Greek élites such as banqueting, horse-riding, and hunting. At most, we might suppose that participating in these activities, along with celebrating these activities through the world of myth, is part of the 'language' in which élites were expressing themselves. As the prestige of being specifically Greek, rather than being identified as a barbarian, was enhanced, there is apparently increasing appropriation by non-Greek communities of myths less favourable to themselves, but ones which nevertheless

¹⁴¹ Porph. VP 22 (cf. Diog. Laert. VP 8. 14, Cic. *Tusc. Disc.* 4. 1 for Pythagoras' meeting with barbarians without mention of their source); A. Mele, 'La *Megale Hellas*: aspetti politici, economici e sociali', *Mégale Hellás: Nome e immagine (Atti del 20e convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto 2-5 ott. 1981)* (Taranto, 1983), 33 ff., argues interestingly that *Megale Hellas* itself is a Pythagorean concept. For other explanations of the name, see Heurgon, *Rise of Rome*, 81-2.

assert their own particular connection with a common Greek world. This common Greek world now asserts its Greek quality specifically, while this quality is coveted and esteemed by other communities.

Sometimes, assertions of connections with the Greek world are actually directed towards the Greek world: if barbarians want to make friends with Greek cities, it is in their best interests to present themselves as good philhellenes. For example, we have already seen how both the Samnites and the Romans apparently exploit the anxiety of the people of Neapolis in 327, each proclaiming themselves to be worthier protectors of precious Greekness. It is interesting too that, according to the Elder Pliny, the Romans put up statues of Pythagoras and Alcibiades in the *comitium* ('assembly') on instructions from the Delphic oracle *bello Samniti* ('in the Samnite War') to put up statues of the 'wisest and bravest of the Greeks'. This notice, which must be related to an early phase of the conflict between Romans and Samnites, baffled Pliny, indicating the distance between his 'thought-world' and that of the late fourth century bc. It is a precious indication of Roman concerns before Alexander dominated the consciousness of the known world, and reveals the integration of Rome within the broader ideology of central and southern Italy.

The choice of Pythagoras is particularly interesting in view of the association of the philosopher and his Pythagorean followers with a more outward-looking attitude towards non-Greek peoples which, I have argued above, was happening in a Greek context in the late fourth century bc. It may be that the Romans felt that, at this time, this association meant that Pythagoras was a particularly good 'way in' to the Greek world for non-Greek peoples.¹⁴² Alcibiades surely owes his place to traditions favourable to him, particularly regarding his pivotal position with regard to the Sicilian expedition. His Athenian character is surely important, both from the point of view of providing a counterbalance to the Spartan ideology surrounding the Tarentines and their allies, and with regard to Roman self-definition at this time by appeal to the imperial image of Athens.¹⁴³

¹⁴² NH 34. 26. A. Alföldi, *Early Rome and the Latins* (Ann Arbor, 1965), 346, suggests that the Roman erection of the statue of Pythagoras is a gesture directed towards Magna Graecia; cf. Mele, 'Il pitagorismo'.

¹⁴³ For the significance of Alcibiades, see esp. F. Zevi, 'Considerazioni sull'elogio di Scipione Barbato', *St. Misc.* 15 (1970), 65 ff.

As for the Samnites themselves in the later fourth century, it may be significant that it was clearly thought to be credible that the Samnite leader Pontius Herennius should be found in discussion with Archytas of Tarentum. A late fourth-century BC obol from the Calvi Risorta hoard, of Tarentine type, with the legend *Peripolon Pitanatan* ('of the Pitanate guard') might just be relevant to the issue of the extent to which the Samnites were party to the 'invention' of their Spartan origins. Unfortunately, very little can be known about this issue: who coined it, and for whom was it coined? One possibility, however, is that it was coined by the Tarentines to pay their Samnite friends. If this were the case, it might provide further evidence that the Samnites were party to the Tarentine 'invention'.¹⁴⁴

The assertion of connections with the Greek world is undoubtedly felt to confer prestige on non-Greek peoples, and the 'snob-value' of Greek culture outlasts by far the imperial prestige of Athens or Macedon. Greek cities continued to assert to the outside world the value of Greekness by, for example, controlling admission to their festivals.¹⁴⁵ Nor was the prestige of Greek culture inhibited by Roman superiority in terms of power. From a Greek point of view, the debates of Naples and Heraclea in 89 BC over whether or not to accept the Roman citizenship surely reflected not only anxiety about heavier burdens, but also concern that their prestigious Greekness could be compromised in the eyes of other Greeks by such a visible loss of independence.¹⁴⁶ From a Roman point of view, Cicero goes on sprinkling his letters with self-conscious *bons mots* and collecting Greek *objets d'art* for his library whilst remarking that the Sicilians are not really up to *Latinitas*, let alone the Roman citizenship:¹⁴⁷ Greek remains very much the cultural language used to assert membership of the Mediterranean élite. Particularly during the 'boom' of the later second century BC, public and private buildings clearly

¹⁴⁴ See M. H. Crawford, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic* (London, 1985), 28, with Appendix 4, 282. For the argument that the legend *Peripolon Pitanatan* refers to the Samnites, see B. Head, *Historia Numorum* (Oxford, 1911). Willeumier, *Tarente*, 81, makes the strange suggestion that these Pitanates were survivors of Archidamus' forces.

¹⁴⁵ See M.-F. Baslez, *L'Étranger dans la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1984), 284–5.

¹⁴⁶ *Pro Balbo* 21; for the idea that Greeks were worried about burdens that Roman citizenship would involve for them, see Lepore, 'Le città italiote', 91.

¹⁴⁷ Sicilians: *Ad Att.* 14. 12.

inspired by Hellenistic models sprang up all over Italy: in urbanised Pompeii, private housing with elaborate entrance-ways;¹⁴⁸ in the remoter, poorer Central Apennines, impressive cult-centres with which members of the élite were closely associated. Such association with the Greek world was expensive and announced prestige, collective, or individual.¹⁴⁹

It is, nevertheless, important to emphasize that appropriation of Greek culture is by no means uniform, and that cataloguing Greek influence is meaningless without considering it within the contexts of individual societies. A variety of responses to Greek culture can be observed amongst Italian peoples. As we have seen, Bruttian Petelia becomes a Greek city, and is recognized officially as such at Delphi.¹⁵⁰ The cases of 'Oscanized' Campania and Paestum are very different. Above all, one might think of 'Return of the Warrior' scenes popular in Campanian and Paestan tomb-painting and vase-painting particularly of the fourth to early third centuries BC, a vivid indication of the preoccupations and self-definition and self-assertion of non-Greek élites of central Italy. The iconography and the dating of different types of scene has now been analysed very effectively by Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo,¹⁵¹ while the cultural contexts had already been discussed with typical insight by Frederiksen,¹⁵² in an article which remains formative for the understanding of culture and society in ancient Italy.

A 'Return of the Warrior' scene within Paestan or Campanian iconography will include the figure of a warrior on horseback, greeted by a woman (presumably the lady of the house), and will

¹⁴⁸ e.g. the Casa di Epidio Rufo built right on the Via dell'Abbondanza, with an extremely imposing façade. L. Richardson, *Pompeii* (Baltimore, 1988), 112 suggests that it was built precisely as a showpiece. Cf. the suggestion of P. Gros, *Architecture et société* (Brussels, 1978), 26 that certain features of the secondary atrium of the Casa del Fauno are paralleled only in the public building of the Hellenistic world, or in the palace-complexes of Hellenistic monarchs.

¹⁴⁹ See esp. La Regina, 'Il Sannio'; for the recurrence of the *gens Stai*a in association with second-century monumental building in Samnium, at Pietrabbondante, Campochiaro, and Vastogirardi, see Po. 13-16; 19; 30; 33; 73.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. n. 67.
¹⁵¹ Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria'; A. Pontrandolfo Greco and A. Rouveret, 'Ideologia funeraria e società a Poseidonia nel IV sec. a.C.', in G. Gnoli and J. P. Vernant (eds.), *La Mort: les morts dans les sociétés anciennes* (Cambridge, 1982), 299 ff.; cf. A. D. Trendall, *The Red-Figured Vases of Lucania, Campania and Sicily* (Oxford, 1967), 398-9; for particularly fine examples, see New York GR 998 (ibid., pl. 158, 1) and Louvre K 276 (ibid., pl. 160, 1).

¹⁵² M. W. Frederiksen, 'Campanian Cavalry: A Question of Origins', *DDA* 2. i (1968), 3 ff.

quite regularly display features alluding to the defeated enemy, either in the form of a figure of a prisoner, or in the form of captured clothing and arms carried by the horseman. Within the context of painted tombs, the 'Return of the Warrior' is a favourite theme, and will form one panel in a complex of scenes from the life of the dead individual, plus scenes referring to the funerary ritual, funerary games for example.

The iconography of 'Return of the Warrior' scenes, and the ideology of the warrior represented within them, illustrates the cultural complexity of these societies, and the composition of the scene itself surely owes something to Apulian representations of young warriors in distinctively non-Greek clothes with their horses, while a woman pours a libation. The earliest known Apulian examples are those of the Sisyphus painter, two bell-craters showing non-Greek warriors. These scenes in turn seem to owe something to Beazley's 'Warrior Leaving Home' scenes on Attic Red-Figure vases, although in these latter cases, the horse is not a feature.¹⁵³

The centrality of the warrior on horseback in Paestan/Campanian iconography is surely further indication of close cultural interaction in southern Italy. The actual organization of the 'Campanian cavalry' probably owes much to Chalcidian influence while the Campanian/Paestan horseman also surely partakes in the prestige of equestrian activity which by now belongs to the common ideological language of Greek and non-Greek élites in central and southern Italy.¹⁵⁴ The occasional presence of Niké in some later paintings, with or without her chariot, is an indication of how the Macedonian ideology of victory was widely appropriated.¹⁵⁵ Occasionally, the warrior himself is portrayed in Greek clothing, or at least in clothing which is not distinctively 'Italic'. What is all important, however, is that the prestige of belonging to an élite world, within which the shared ideological language is very much Greek, is associated with self-assertion within culturally specific ways. The warrior's clothing is usually distinctively 'local', while the woman's clothing is always

¹⁵³ Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria' (1985), 96; cf. J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1963), 595/69, 599/6, 631/3, 798/148, 1045/5, 1124/1.

¹⁵⁴ Frederiksen, 'Campanian Cavalry', esp. 21–2, 15.

¹⁵⁵ Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria', 109, S. Weinstock, 'Victor and Invictus', *Harvard Theological Review*, 50 (1957), 211 ff.; S. Oakley, 'The Roman Conquest of Italy', in J. Rich and G. Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Roman World* (London, 1993), 9 ff., 30.

'local'. Particular interest in the spoils of the defeated enemy may find parallels in stories of early Rome,¹⁵⁶ and is not a feature of Greek representations. In the tombs, the paintings work as part of a whole complex of the assertion of values and connections important to that society specifically.

One of the most eloquent expressions of the complexity of the issue of self-definition through iconography influenced by a number of different cultures is found in one of the paintings from a Paestan tomb discovered in the nineteenth century, and known now only through drawings made at the time. Paintings on the walls of the tomb, to be dated to the late fourth to early third centuries BC, show scenes of the life of the dead man, with emphasis on his status as a horseman and warrior, in a manner familiar in Paestan and Campanian painting in general. On the two long walls, the horseman is shown in full Paestan panoply, fighting an Amazon in one scene, and a Greek in a Phrygian-type helmet in another. The helmet may be interpreted as a Macedonian helmet which was adopted by the Tarentines in the late fourth century BC. That we are meant to draw parallels between the two scenes seems clear, and the motif of the Amazon indicates both a real comprehension of Greek symbolism and the ability to redeploy it to great effect.¹⁵⁷ Through this comprehension and redeployment of both Greek political iconography and the cultural language of Hellenistic élites, the Paestan warrior is represented as subduing a Greek, who has taken on the barbarian role.

The non-Greek inhabitants of Paestum were apparently very closely in touch with Greek culture, but did not require to be represented as Greeks. These paintings act as a reminder that each society makes unique use of the prestige of Greek culture in its self-definition.

The very different examples of Petelia and Paestum offer us tantalizing clues about the different uses of Greek culture within each society. But when a society is using not only art and institutions to define itself, but also literature, the opportunities for the manipulation of Greek discourse available to the user multiply, as do the opportunities now available to the interpreter. It is time to turn to Rome.

¹⁵⁶ Frederiksen, 'Campanian Cavalry', 5; cf. C. Nicolet, 'Les Equites campani et leurs représentations figurées', *MEFRA* 74 (1962), 463 ff.

¹⁵⁷ Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria', 120–1; for the theme of Greeks and barbarians as it appears in fourth-century southern Italian iconography, see Adam, 'Tarente et les Barbares'.

Roman Contexts

INTRODUCTION: DEVELOPED IMAGES

Not from such parents as these were born the youth who fouled the sea with Punic blood, and brought low Pyrrhus, and Antiochus the Great, and terrible Hannibal, but the manly offspring of country soldiers were they, taught to turn the clods of earth with Sabellian hoes, and to carry home hewn logs to please their strict mother . . .¹

By the Late Republic, it was common for ancient authors to locate moral excellence both in the past and outside the city of Rome. In Horace's poem, from which I quote above, contemporary Rome is characterized by sexual and political dissipation, infected by foreign luxury, almost brought to her knees by recent foreign campaigns, her decadence summed up, significantly, by the image of an adulterous *matura virgo* ('grown-up girl').² Images of a contrasting, rustic, pristine, masculine Italy abound in literature of the Late Republic and Early Empire, highlighting the immorality of the city. They occur in the context of the ideology of *novitas*, as innocents duped by calculating Romans, and as staunch upholders of old-fashioned ideals long-forgotten in the decadent days of the Julio-Claudians.³ As exemplars of moral excellence, peoples of the Central Apennines

¹ Hor. *Odes* 3. 6 33–41.

² *Odes* 3. 6. 21–4. For Augustan emphasis on female behaviour as a focus of moral renewal, see e.g. Suet. *Aug.* 64–5; S. Dixon, *The Roman Mother* (London, 1988), 71 ff.

³ e.g. Sall. *BJ* 85 for Marius on the *nobiles*; T. P. Wiseman, *New Men in the Roman Senate 139 BC–AD 14* (Oxford, 1971), 113 for the attribution to the *novi homines* of 'all the ancient virtues of the central-Italian hill people'; Livy 1. 45 for the Sabine duped by the Roman in the sacrifice of a cow to Diana: the state of the sacrificer would be *caput rerum*; Tac. *Ann.* 3. 55. 8 ff. for the effect on the morality of the Roman élite of the entry of austere Italians into the Senate under Vespasian; cf. 16. 5 for municipals at Nero's performances.

are predominant, characterized frequently as Herodotean 'rough peoples from rough lands', as austere and manly soldiers.⁴

These stirring images were the starting-point of Salmon's reconstruction of Samnite society, and he attempted to match the known archaeological and epigraphic record up with developed Roman ideology of this kind.⁵ In Part Two, I discuss the specific features of society in the Central Apennines that helped to make this area a convincing moral and social antithesis to Rome: not all Italian peoples succeeded in becoming figures of austerity for Rome, Etruscans being the most obvious exceptions. In the present chapter, however, I concentrate on Roman ideology, and my purpose is to show that representation of peoples of the Central Apennines changed dramatically over time in Roman literature, reflecting not only the changing relationships between Rome and these peoples, but also changing needs at Rome. Rome's practice of incorporating other peoples into her citizen body was accompanied by a distinct ideological development which drew on Athenian images of barbarians, country-people and Spartans, but which resulted in a figure peculiar to Rome: the incorporated outsider who embodied Rome's morally upright past.

1. ROME AND THE GREEK CITIES

I have already remarked on the importance of Rome's self-promotion as a friend to the Greek cities of Italy in the course of the Samnite wars, exemplified by the debate at Neapolis in 327, and by the setting up of statues of Pythagoras and Alcibiades in the *comitium* ('assembly').⁶ There is, in fact, a fair body of evidence to suggest that the third century BC in particular was an important time for Roman self-

⁴ e.g. Strabo 5. 4. 2 = 241 C for bravery of Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, and Frentani; Virg. *Georg.* 2, 167 ff. for Italy's excellent manpower, her 'genus acre virum' 'keen stock of men', a list of those peoples who were once Rome's greatest Italian enemies, headed by 'Marsos pubemque Sabellam' 'Marsi and the Sabellian youth'; Pliny *NH* 3. 106 for the idea that the *regio quarta* is made up of *fortissimae gentes*; Appian *ac* 1. 46 for the warlike aspect of the Marsi; for some less desirable wild men in a wild landscape, see e.g. Livy 9. 13. 7; for 'rough peoples, rough lands', cf. e.g. Herod. 9. 122. 3.

⁵ e.g. Salmon, *Samnium*, 59, 'Horace, who as a native from Venusia was in a position to know, implies that a Samnite wife enjoyed respect and exercised authority in the household: it was she who trained the children and she had a reputation for doing so with strictness.' This statement is based entirely on Hor. *Odes* 3. 6. 33-41, in which the staunch mother in the 'Sabellian' landscape features as the antithesis of the Roman *matura virgo* at l. 22.

⁶ See Ch. 1, s. 3 above.

promotion directed not only towards the Greek cities of Italy, but also towards the Hellenistic world as a whole. During the third century, particularly by means of the ending of the Samnite Wars, the war with Pyrrhus, and the outbreak of the First Punic War, Rome was brought very much more directly onto the 'map' of important powers within the Hellenistic world, and it is thus no surprise to see her during this period deliberately reaching out to the Greek world, and promoting her credentials as a friend to Greek cities.

As Rome appeared on this 'map', and as her power became more obvious, she met with a variety of responses from the Greek world. On the negative side, in the First Punic War, Rome had presumably been felt to be so despicable that another 'barbarian' power, Carthage, could be hotly preferred by Philinus of Syracuse.⁷ One leitmotif of this period is Roman greed. In the 190s, T. Flamininus defended Rome's actions in a letter to the Thessalian Chyretienses, claiming that Rome never wished to take action for the sake of gain: this defence suggests strongly the kind of accusations that needed to be answered.⁸ Later on in the century, Metrodorus of Scepsis was apparently complaining that Rome's sack of Volsinii in 264 BC had been motivated by the booty of two thousand statues.⁹ At times, Greeks would focus on the barbarian origins of Rome to explain her present suspicious character: Rome's claim of kinship with the Greek world through descent from Trojan Aeneas could be countered by the insistence that Aeneas had never left Troy, and Greeks could dwell on the less respectable aspects of Rome's alternative, 'indigenous' myth of origins, the Romulus-story.¹⁰

Elsewhere, the Romans were perceived in a more positive light by the Greek cities: after going over to Rome, the city of Locri issued coinage depicting Pistis crowning Roma.¹¹ Rome herself can be seen actively propagating positive images of herself at this time. For example, at times, Rome and her defenders made use of the Greek/barbarian polarity in a relatively straightforward way, setting her in the role of civilized Greek against the barbarian. One coin-type issued

⁷ Polyb. 1. 14. 3 = *FGH* 174 F 2; for possible reasons for Philinus' attitude, see F. W. Walbank, 'Polybius, Philinus and the First Punic War', *CQ* 39 (1945), 11 ff.

⁸ *RDGE* 33. 1. 12 = *SIG*(3) 593.

⁹ Pliny *NH* 34. 34.

¹⁰ For claims that Aeneas never left Troy, see J. Bremmer and N. Horsfall (eds.), *Roman Myth and Mythography* (*BICS* Suppl. 52, London, 1987), 12. For unsavoury aspects of the Romulus story, see e.g. apologetic tendencies of Plutarch and Dionysius in telling the story of the Rape of the Sabine women: Plut. *Rom.* 14. 6; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 3. 30 for the revealing idea that such a rape is 'an ancient Greek tradition'.

¹¹ Crawford, *Coinage and Money*, (1985), 33.

by Rome either during or immediately after the expedition of Pyrrhus portrays Apollo, surely alluding to the Greek association with him of the victory of civilization over barbarians, as a result of the Greek defeat of Gauls in 279 at Delphi, a victory that was much vaunted for political and ideological ends by Greek states. The Romans too could claim to have kept the barbarian Gauls at bay as a result of their triumph at the Battle of Sentinum in 295.¹² For the sake of comparison, a few decades later, in the eastern Mediterranean, Attalos I's claims of victory over Gauls in the 230s to 220s, and his monumental use of images of defeated Gauls at Pergamon and at Athens are striking illustrations of another case when the figurative language of the Greek world is used to strengthen claims of membership of that world.¹³

Within literature, Timaeus found 'proof' of Rome's Trojan ancestry in the 'survival' of Trojan ritual in contemporary Rome.¹⁴ Early Roman literature itself, with its strong interest in telling of Rome's origins, located Rome firmly within the contemporary 'civilized' Hellenistic world. When history-writing began at Rome with Fabius Pictor, Trojan tales and the story of Romulus alike were full of Hellenistic wonders and etymological games: the justice of Rome's contemporary conflict with Carthage was a reflection of her honourable, non-barbarous origins.¹⁵ Ennius' *Annales* too related tales of Rome's origins, framed within a self-conscious, Callimachean re-creation of Homer. Rome's own epic account of herself was set firmly within the tradition of sophisticated Hellenistic poetry.¹⁶

¹² G. Nachtergaele, *Les Galates en Grèce et les Sôtéria de Delphes* (Brussels, 1977), esp. 175 ff., and 295 ff. for the institution and celebration of the *Soteria*; for the Roman coinage, see M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge, 1974), no. 15; cf. Crawford, *Coinage and Money*, 30 ff.

¹³ J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge, 1986), 79 ff.

¹⁴ Polyb. 12. 4b = FGH 566 F 36; for possible motivation of Timaeus, see A. Momigliano, 'Atene nel III secolo a.C. e la scoperta di Roma nelle storie di Timeo di Tauromenio', *Riv. stor. ital.* 11 (1959), 529 ff.

¹⁵ e.g. the miraculous white sow, fr. 4 P.; for discussion of Fabius Pictor's audience, see Badian, 'The Early Historians', 2-7; cf. suggestion of Ogilvie, *Livy Books 1-5*, 53, that the first extended Roman account of the rescue of the Twins, occurring in Fabius Pictor fr. 5b P. may have been directly influenced by Sophocles' *Tyros*; NB S. West, 'Lycophron Italicised', *JHS* 104 (1984), 127 ff., 146 for the comparatively late date (between 168 and the late first century bc; it is hard to be more precise) of Lycophron *Alex.* 1226-31, rendering discussion of these lines irrelevant here.

¹⁶ For Ennius' Callimachean dreams of Homer, see *Ann.* 2-3, with Sk. p. 148 on Callimacheanism; A. S. Gratwick, 'Ennius' *Annales*', in E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, ii: *Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 1982), 60, cf. 66 ff. on the importance of Ennius' role in Hellenizing the form of the Latin epic.

Rome's use of the Greek/barbarian polarity was not, however, always as simple as this. Rome did not always promote herself straightforwardly as a Greek city, but can also be seen exploiting her ambiguous position of both sharing in the Greek world and having an identity separate from this. At other times, she actually exploited her 'barbarian' status. Polybius describes the appeal of the Mamertini at Messana to Rome in 270 BC, on the grounds of *homophylia* ('being kin').¹⁷ In what sense exactly could the Oscan-speaking Mamertini¹⁸ consider themselves to be *homophyloi* to Rome? One explanation might be that the Mamertini had absorbed, and were exploiting in a novel way, the Greek dichotomy of Greeks/barbarians. Certainly, it is clear from Plautus that, in the early second century BC, Romans could find it amusing to hear themselves portrayed as barbarians,¹⁹ while being scandalized by Greek references to themselves as *Opikoi*, the supposed prehistoric ancestors of Oscan-speaking peoples.²⁰ The Mamertini could, then, appeal to the Romans as fellow barbarians, non-Greekness being the principle of kinship.

Elsewhere, Rome's ambiguous position is exploited through myth. On a coin-type of the post-Pyrrhan period, Hercules is portrayed, along with the She-Wolf and Twins.²¹ This is an interesting combination: the assertion of connection with Herakles was very popular in Italy with Greeks and non-Greeks alike,²² perhaps not only because of the myths of his travels, but also because he was a supremely adaptable figure. For Rome, Hercules carried with him none of the problems that might be associated with Trojan Aeneas, enemy of Greeks, and perhaps this consideration was subsequently to lead Fabius Pictor to choose Hercules as the Romans' ultimate ancestor.²³ But on this coin-type, the portrayal also of the She-Wolf and Twins marked out the uniqueness of Rome: by setting herself apart to this extent, Rome reserved the possibility that she would not just be an

¹⁷ Polyb. 1. 50.

¹⁸ Ve. 196 for an Oscan building-inscription, in which *meddices* (Oscan magistrates) together with the *touto Mamertino* (Mamertine people) oversee the construction or reconstruction of a temple to Apollo.

²⁰ Pliny *NH* 29. 14.

²¹ Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, no. 20 (269–266 BC).

²² e.g. Bayet, *l'Hercule romain*, for the spread of Herakles in Italy from the age of Greek colonization onwards; cf. for Herakles amongst the Paeligni, Van Wousterghem, 'Le Culte d'Hercule', 36 ff.; for the Pentri and Frentani, see A. Di Niro, *Il culto d'Ercole tra i Sanniti pentri e frentani: nuove testimonianze* (Rome, 1977).

²³ Taormina inscription, *SEG* 36. 1123.

equal partner in the Greek world. This ambiguity is perhaps more clearly exemplified in Ennius' later depiction of the war with Pyrrhus. The Trojan war was fought again, with Pyrrhus as Aeacidas, and with clear emphasis on the Greekness of Pyrrhus' side.²⁴ The outcome of this Trojan war, however, was obviously a reversal of the mythical conflict: this time the Trojans won.

2. ROME AND THE BARBARIANS

(a) Carthaginians

While the first Roman attempt at national history was written in Greek and directed outwards towards the Greek world, consciousness of Rome's new position in the world was soon to be reflected at home, in the transformation of her physical aspect and in the creation of a Greek-style epic for the Greek city. As Rome promoted herself as a Greek city, she cast others in the role of barbarians. In the first half of the second century BC, there are, not surprisingly, abundant references to Carthaginians in Roman literature, and there is emphasis on Carthaginian foreignness, effeminacy, and cruelty: Carthaginians are descended from a woman,²⁵ wear women's clothes,²⁶ can be referred to as *Gugga*²⁷ (presumably a Carthaginian word used in a derogatory way), sacrifice children,²⁸ and bury their enemies waist deep before lighting a fire around them.²⁹ These portraits are reminiscent of fifth-century BC Athenian representations of Persians in, for example, Aeschylus' *Persae* and Aristophanes' *Acharnians*.³⁰ It is surely altogether likely that Rome's images of Carthage were actually informed by this Athenian discourse. This is not to suggest that Rome's construction of Carthage was any less dynamic, but pre-existing stereotypes commonly inform the way in which an individual or group is perceived, and, in particular, the kind of features upon

²⁴ Ann. 167 (Sk.) for Pyrrhus as Aeacidas cf. 197 (Sk.).

²⁵ From Dido: Enn. Ann. 297 (Sk.).

²⁶ Plaut. *Poen.* 1303 for *mulierosum genus* ('womanish species'); cf. 1304 for *hanc amatricem Africam* ('this African sweetheart': the feminine is surely significant); cf. Sk.'s note on Enn. Ann. 297. ²⁷ Plaut. *Poen.* 977.

²⁸ Enn. Ann. 214 (Sk.), 'Poeni soliti suos sacrificare puellios' ('Carthaginians accustomed to sacrifice their own little children'). For 'dispassionate' language such as is found in this line as a distancing technique in ethnography, see Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 256. ²⁹ Cato *ORF*(4) no. 8, 193. ³⁰ cf. Ch. 1, n. 2 above.

which attention is focused.³¹ In these portraits of Persians/Carthaginians, there seems to be a striking combination of fear and bravado: foreignness and effeminacy may be ridiculed as inferior and therefore unthreatening, but the discourse of womanish enemies has an added edge. In ancient thought, women are not only weak, but also uncontrollable and animal-like. Womanish enemies may likewise be both weak and beyond male control at the same time: when womanishness is juxtaposed with the cruelty supposedly typical of barbarians, the mixture is potent.³²

(b) *Italian barbarians*

As long-standing and dangerous opponents of Rome, Carthaginians must have seemed particularly well suited in Roman eyes to play the barbarian foil to Greek Rome. However, Carthaginians are not the only people who are cast in the role of barbarians by Rome in early Latin literature: Italians too became barbarians. Dionysius of Halicarnassus was later to present this idea in its clearest form when he mused on the question of how the Romans could have remained so civilized when they received into their city so many barbarian (i.e. non-Greek) peoples;³³ despite all assertions of Greek ancestry on the part of numerous other Italian peoples, for him Rome remained the only Greek city. This idea surely goes back to the Middle Republic, when Rome was promoting her Greekness not only with an eye to Greek opinion, but also in order to assert her own superiority over the rest of Italy. Certainly in the early third century BC, Rome was clearly expressing her role as conqueror in terms familiar both from Macedon and from Athens: in these years, the emphasis on Niké/Victoria in

³¹ Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 102 ff. for stereotypes in ancient thought; cf. McDonald, 'We Are Not French!', 20–1 for the selection of, and meaning given to, actual differences on the boundary between 'us and them', providing 'empirical confirmation' of the constructed identity. Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies*, 17–8 and 31 for the selective features perceived in gypsies by non-gypsies.

³² For both aspects of women, see e.g. Livy 34. 1–8 on the repeal of the Oppian law; for depiction of a dangerous woman in power in the Middle Republic, see Polyb. 2. 8 for Queen Teuta. The danger associated in ancient thought with women in influential positions is not brought out in M. Lefkowitz, 'Influential Women', in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *Images of Women in Antiquity* (London, 1983), 49 ff.

For the representation of enemies/subjects as animals, in which the double aspect of weakness/danger is also apparent, see e.g. Dio 57. 10. 5 for Tiberius' sentiments about provincial government as shearing rather than flaying sheep; V.P. 2. 1. 29 for the snake-like Maroboduus of the Marcomanni.

³³ *Ant. Rom.* 1. 89.

monuments reported to have been set up in Rome is strong,³⁴ while Roma was modelled closely on Athena in the iconography of Roman coins.³⁵ We should not, of course, forget that images of victory inspired by Macedon were popular in contemporary central and southern Italy, as was the adaptable theme of Greeks versus barbarians.³⁶ The only real difference in the case of Rome was that such themes became enshrined in the literature and iconography of the winning side.

The use of Praenestines within Plautus' plays is a particularly interesting illustration of Roman portrayal of Italian peoples as barbarians. At several points, jokes are made about Praenestine Latin. The most interesting example occurs in the *Truculentus*. Here, the rustic slave Truculentus is made to speak in non-Roman Latin, using the form *rabonem* instead of the 'standard' form *arrabonem* ('pledge'). When Astaphium comments on this form as a *beluam* ('monstrosity'), Truculentus replies that he is using this shortened form on the analogy of Praenestine *conia* for *ciconia* ('stork').³⁷ Representations of foreign dialects and languages in Athenian and Roman comedy frequently play on the idea that other languages and dialects are not merely foreign from the point of view of the language used by playwright and audience, but actually deficient by virtue of their unintelligibility and indicative of stupidity on the part of their speakers.³⁸ In the *Truculentus*, it is surely significant that it is an uncouth rustic slave³⁹ who refers to the Praenestine example on which he has coined his *beluam*, a description which is a comic exaggeration, but which nevertheless plays on the ancient idea that foreigners are subhuman.⁴⁰ Here is an early example of the assertion of Rome as the only city in Italy, rusticity beginning outside her walls. The town/country polarity occurred in Athenian ideology with reference to Attica,⁴¹ but the Roman version is very different. When Romans

³⁴ Weinstock, 'Victor and Invictus'; Oakley, 'The Roman Conquest of Italy'.

³⁵ A. Burnett, 'Iconography of Roman Coin Types, 3rd Century BC', *NC* 146 (1986), 67 ff.

³⁶ Cf. ch. 1, s. 4 above.

³⁷ *Truc.* 687 ff. For real differences in Praenestine Latin, see R. Coleman, 'Dialectal Variation in Republican Latin, with Special Reference to Praenestine', *PCPS* 216 (1990), 1 ff.

³⁸ Cf. e.g. Aristophanes' Scythian Archer in *Thesm.* 1001 ff., and Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 19, 122.

³⁹ See e.g. Astaphium's comment on Truculentus' behaviour at *Truc.* 252 ff.: 'item ut de frumento anseres, clamore absterret abigit; ita est agrestis.' ('He frightens us and drives us away, like geese from the corn; he is such a bumpkin.')

⁴⁰ Cf. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 51 ff.

⁴¹ See K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford, 1974), 12–14 for a useful collection of references and comments.

represented other Italian peoples as *rustici*, they asserted their own superiority and centrality at the expense of cities and tribes of Italy which remained politically independent, and which maintained independent cultural links with the Greek world and other communities.⁴²

Praeneste recurs in other humorous contexts in Plautus. In a fragment of the *Bacchides*, there is a reference to Praenestine boastfulness,⁴³ while Praeneste also appears in the list of *barbaricas urbes* ('barbarian cities') by which Ergasilus swears his oaths in Plautus' *Captivi*.⁴⁴ This second joke surely works on the recognition that this list of Latin cities includes very considerable, ancient cities which were too close to Rome for her to be able to ignore with any comfort. These cities were surely scarcely more 'barbarian' than Rome was herself in the early second century BC. But in these Plautine contexts, jokes about Praeneste being rustic or barbarian hit directly at the sort of reasons for which she might quite reasonably be 'boastful'. Although the remains of the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste visible today are probably to be dated to the last decade of the second BC at the latest,⁴⁵ there are indications in the literary sources of a sanctuary at Praeneste which was certainly famous in the first half of the second century BC. For example, Livy introduces his story of L. Postumius Albinus' insistence in 173 BC that the Praenestines should send a magistrate to meet him and provide lodging for him at public expense (a hitherto unheard-of request) with a 'flash-back' that gives a motive for this behaviour. Apparently, at some time previously, when Postumius was travelling as a *privatus* to sacrifice at the temple of Fortuna, his visit was marked by no show of honour, public or private.⁴⁶ Besides giving an example of the kind of high-handed Roman behaviour which might have been associated with Roman insistence that other cities in Latium were 'barbarian', this episode also suggests the importance of the sanctuary of Praeneste in the early second century BC, in that it attracted a high-ranking Roman. Further indication of this is provided by another episode in Livy, in which Prusias, King of Bithynia, offers sacrifice at the sanctuary in 167 BC.⁴⁷ Cicero, in the *De Divinatione*, also has Carneades remarking on the temple of Fortuna in 154 BC.⁴⁸

⁴² The *urbanitas/rusticitas* polarity is important in Cicero, and the dismissal of non-Roman Latin orators at *De Or.* 3. 42–6 on the grounds of their *rusticitas* well exemplifies the ease with which Romans could ignore the fact that there were other cities in Italy. ⁴³ 1. 12 (Lindsay). ⁴⁴ 879 ff.

⁴⁵ Gros, *Architecture*, 50–3.

⁴⁶ Livy 42. 1.

⁴⁷ Livy 45. 44. 8.

⁴⁸ Cic. *De Div.* 2. 87.

In the decades immediately following the time when Plautus joked about the rusticity and barbarism of Praeneste, then, the sanctuary of Fortuna was certainly associated with wide fame. Although this wide fame cannot be proved to be contemporary with Plautus' remarks, it might reasonably be supposed that Praeneste at the turn of the second century BC was hardly to be associated literally with 'rusticity', or even with 'barbarism' as usually understood in the ancient world. I would suggest that these jokes about Praeneste reflect real anxiety about a potential cultural and political threat to Rome, and seek to 'cut her down to size' in a manner that is comparable with the jokes about Carthage. The Roman Greek/barbarian discourse was adapted to make assertions about superiority and centrality with regard not only to peoples 'out there', but also over Italian peoples with whom Rome had long had close cultural and political links, some of whom, even at this stage, had a share in her citizenship.

While humour is an effective way of promoting a sense of ethnic solidarity and superiority amongst members of the audience,⁴⁹ there are other devices for bringing a similar reaction. An ethnographical approach can be very useful, as chosen images of other, foreign societies may be used to assert the normality, centrality, and superiority of one's own society.⁵⁰ It is significant that, in Ennius' *Annales*, all 'ethnographical' details included were apparently concentrated on the 'wrong' side: enemies of Rome. So Carthaginians are, as we have seen, the 'tunicata iuventus' ('young men in shifts'), descended from Dido, who sacrifice their little children.⁵¹ Italians do not seem to have been associated by Ennius with quite such heinous crimes. Nevertheless, within Italy, it is those who have been recent enemies of Rome who have alien institutions and habits. Under this heading comes the *Bruttace bilingui*.⁵² Given the Bruttians' geographical position, there is no reason to doubt that the Bruttians were actually in some sense bilingual, and of course their knowledge of Greek is another indication of the penetration of Greek influences beyond the Greek cities and their immediate territories, a phenomenon which archaeological evidence has made familiar.⁵³ However, Skutsch has

⁴⁹ See M. L. Apte, *Humor and Laughter: An Anthropological Approach* (Ithaca, 1985), 119–120; Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 17–18.

⁵⁰ Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 212 ff., for the ways in which, through comparison and contrast, Greeks are the measure of other peoples in Herodotus.

⁵¹ *Ann.* 297; 214 (Sk.).

⁵² Porph. *Ad Hor. Sat.* 1. 10. 30 = Lucilius fr. 1124 M., Enn. *Ann.* 477 (Sk.).

⁵³ For a good summary of evidence of Greek influences in inland Calabria (Bruttium), see Poccetti, *Per un' identità culturale dei Brettii*, 11 ff.

shown that, in early Latin literature, bilingualism frequently also had dubious moral associations, implying that the speaker was *fallax* and *captiosus* ('deceitful' and 'fallacious'). For example, in the *Poenulus*, Hanno's ability to speak both Carthaginian and Latin is seen as a sign of his dubious moral character: being bilingual is explicitly linked with trickery.⁵⁴ Given that this association does occur in early second century Latin literature, and given the Bruttians' extensive support of Hannibal against Rome and her allies during the Second Punic War, it seems very likely that the Bruttians' bilingualism was linked at Rome, and by Ennius, not only with the overtones of ethnic impurity and inferiority associated with the Greek term *diglossos*, but also with treachery and two-facedness.

Most strikingly, it is surely the siege of Capua which is being described when the *meddices* (Oscan magistrates) are mentioned,⁵⁵ a distinctive, foreign institution in a treacherous city. It is also virtually certain that Ennius is again referring to events at Capua in the fragment 'de muris rem gerit Opuscus' ('the Opuscus is waging war from the walls'). The form *Opuscus* is interesting. Skutsch suggests that such a pronunciation would not have been current at Rome at the time when Ennius was writing: the form *Oscus* would have been more normal. If this is so, one needs to ask why Ennius prefers the form *Opuscus* here. Skutsch argues that this has to do with Ennius being a native speaker of Oscan, an idea which must derive from the 'saying of Ennius' about his 'three hearts'.⁵⁶ But Ennius' preference for the form *Opuscus* might be explained in a way which would suggest usage more considered than a temporary lapse into Ennius' native language. In using a form that was obsolete in Rome at the time, Ennius might be emphasizing the foreignness and primitivism of the treacherous Capua. These aspects might further be underlined by the fact that, in the early part of the second century BC, *Opikos*, the Greek form of the 'ethnic', was apparently being used as a term of abuse to describe the worst variety of Italian barbarian in existence.⁵⁷

Ennius' depiction of treacherous Capua might be seen within a developing tradition of 'Oscan' inferiority. In Chapter 1, I suggested that it was possible to see an 'ideological battle' going on between Romans and Samnites around 327 BC, when both were competing over

⁵⁴ Sk.'s note on Enn. *Ann.* 477; cf. Plaut. *Pers.* 299; *Truc.* 781; *Poen.* 1032; Virg. *Aen.* 1, 661.

⁵⁵ Enn. *Ann.* 289 (Sk.), with note.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 291 (Sk.) with note. *Operis incerti fragmenta annalibus fortasse tribuenda* fr. 1 (Sk.) for Ennius' 'three hearts'.

⁵⁷ Pliny *NH* 29. 14.

Greek cities such as Neapolis. While Romans were playing up their own philhellenic credentials, it would have made sense for them to play down similar credentials asserted by the Samnites, and to exploit Greek anxiety about Samnite pressure on their cities.⁵⁸ Anxiety of this kind might be inferred at a comparatively early date from Thucydides' depiction of *Opikoi* occupying a vast area of southern Italy in prehistory, contemporary anxiety perhaps retrojected onto an imagined amorphous tribe at this early period.⁵⁹ Considerably later, in the early second century BC, Cato's mention of Greek jibes about *Opikoi* suggest the significance of Oscan-speakers in Greek imagination, as well as Roman desires to dissociate themselves from these peoples.⁶⁰ In view of Samnite pressure on the Greek cities of the south, it might well be supposed that *Opikoi* had derogatory associations at the time when Thucydides was writing as well.

Against this background, the massacre of citizens of Rhegium by Decius' Campani during the early part of the third century BC becomes very interesting. The story appears in its fullest versions in Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. In both accounts, the citizens of Rhegium appeal to Rome for protection, fearing attack from Pyrrhus and the Carthaginians (according to Polybius) and from the Lucanians and Bruttians (according to Dionysius).⁶¹ The Romans give them a garrison of Campani under the command of Decius. Decius begins to envy the prosperity of the Rhegians and begins to plot a take-over.⁶² According to Dionysius, Decius manages to persuade Rhegian tribunes and *stratiotai* ('soldiers') to massacre the leading Rhegians by claiming that these leading Rhegians are preparing to go over to Pyrrhus. At this point, Dionysius' narrative becomes particularly interesting: the real impetus for the massacre comes when Decius receives a letter informing him of the intention of the Rhegians. According to some sources, says Dionysius, Decius sent this letter to himself, pretending that it was written by some personal friend. According to other sources, he says, it was sent to him by the Roman consul Fabricius, instructing Decius to massacre the Rhegians in order to forestall their desertion to Pyrrhus.⁶³ Dionysius himself expresses uncertainty with regard to this matter: both versions are equally possible, in his opinion.⁶⁴ It looks, then, as if doubts remained in

⁵⁸ Cf. ch. 1, s. 3 above. ⁵⁹ 6. 2. 4.

⁶⁰ Pliny, *NH* 29. 14, quoting Cato. For citation and translation of the passage in question, see Ch. 1, s. 2 above. ⁶¹ Polyb. 1. 7. 6; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 20. 4. 2.

⁶² Polyb. 1. 7. 8; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 20. 4. 3. ⁶³ *Ant. Rom.* 20. 5-6.

⁶⁴ *Ant. Rom.* 20. 6: *ἔχει δὲ λόγον ἀμφότερα* ('both are reasonable').

Greek minds: were Decius and his Campani acting under Roman orders? In Polybius' account too, there is a hint of unease surrounding the incident: after the massacre, the Romans do not intervene immediately, as they are kept busy with warfare, but of course, as soon as they have time, they punish the Campani, restoring, 'as far as possible', their reputation for *pistis* ('good faith') amongst their allies.⁶⁵ Polybius seems to be making apologies for the Romans, and is perhaps seeking to deal with a tradition according to which the action of Decius and his Campani was at least initially condoned by the Romans, if not actually performed on Roman instructions. The whole incident is very suspicious. The possibility certainly remains that Romans were capitalizing on anti-'Oscan' feeling amongst the Greek cities, in using the Campani to do a necessary, but embarrassing, job in preventing the Rhegians from going over to Pyrrhus.⁶⁶

The theme of primitivism, thought to be a stock feature of a major 'type' of barbarian, in fact recurs with some frequency in early Roman literary portrayals of Italians. In order to play her role as a Greek city effectively, Rome concentrated not only on presenting her current activities in an attractive light, but also on playing up the civilized aspects of her very origins. While hostile Greeks apparently dwelt on the hoarier aspects of tradition about Rome's remote past, early Roman writers traced Roman descent from respectable Greek—or, at the very least, Trojan—ancestors, and emphasized the miraculous aspects of the city-that-was-to-be-Rome.

Meanwhile, images of primitivism such as we have found applied to Italy as a whole in Greek discourse remained in Roman literature, but were pushed outside the city of Rome, and before the arrival of Aeneas. Such primitivism came eventually to have positive overtones: Virgil's Latins are the descendants of the Age of Saturn, living frugally in harmony with the gods, and without war, their peace disturbed by the arrival of Aeneas and the Trojans.⁶⁷ But primitivism

⁶⁵ Polyb. 1. 7. 9–10.

⁶⁶ For suspicious aspects of the Rhegium story, see F. Cassola, *I gruppi politici romani nel III secolo a.C.* (Trieste, 1962), 171–8; A. J. Toynbee *Hannibal's Legacy* (Oxford, 1965), i. 101–2; Frederiksen, *Campania*, 222–3.

⁶⁷ Virg. *Aen.* 7. 202 ff.: 'ne fugite hospitium, neve ignorete Latinos! Saturni gentem haud vincolo nec legibus aequam, I sponte sua veterisque dei se more tenentem.' 'neither flee our hospitality, nor let it escape you that we are Latins, descendants of Saturn, our sense of justice not enforced by chain or laws, but of our own accord keeping within the customs of the old god.' Cf. 9. 598 ff. for Rutulian Remulus on the contrast between the hardy native way of life and Trojan effeminacy.

in ancient thought could have either positive or negative associations. Primitive peoples could thus be Noble Savages like Virgil's Latins, living in a state of desirable simplicity, and uncorrupted by the evils of modern society; or they could be simply Savages, brutish and unpredictable.⁶⁸ In the works of writers of the early second century BC such as Ennius and Naevius, primitivism seems to have had very negative connotations. For Ennius, the reign of Saturn in Latium is characterized by cannibalism.⁶⁹ In Naevius the original inhabitants of the site of Rome live in the woods and are not warlike, an attribute which is surely not intended to be a compliment in imperialistic Rome of the late third century BC,⁷⁰ a world far removed from the anxiety that followed the Civil Wars of the end of the Republic.

3. IMPERIAL ANXIETIES

Against this background of Roman self-assertion, within the first few decades of the second century BC, some more sombre notes were sounded. The acquisition of empire was thought to bring moral and social problems, and to lead to decline. This was very much a feature of Greek theories about imperialism,⁷¹ and was applied to Rome by Polybius. It is surely no accident that Polybius, at the beginning of Book 6, chose the Roman *defeat* at the battle of Cannae in 216 as the time to review the Roman constitution at its peak before the contemporary period of violent change. The turning-point, in his opinion, was the Roman acquisition of unrivalled power in the Mediterranean, and the influx of wealth, an event which he times at the fall of the Macedonian kingdom in 168 BC.⁷² In Polybius' account, what happens to Rome at this time mirrors what happens to individual power-systems when those in power grow complacent: violence, and divi-

⁶⁸ Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 149 for the contradictory nature of Greek views (taken as a whole) on barbarians, who can represent a utopian primitivism or simple inferiority.

⁶⁹ Enn. *Euhemerus* 60 ff.
⁷⁰ Macrob. *Sat.* 6. 5. 9 (*Ad Aen.* 10. 551: *silvicolae Fauni*) = Naevius fr. 11 Strzelecki (= fr. 21, Morel): 'silvicolae homines bellicque inertes' ('men dwelling in the woods and unskilled in warfare'). W. V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327-70 BC* (Oxford, 1979), 9 ff. for Roman attitudes towards war in the late third to early second centuries BC.

⁷¹ e.g. Ar. *Pol.* 7. 1334^a; Plato *Laws* 3. 698b-c; Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 127.

⁷² 31. 25; cf. 6. 2. 3.

⁷³ 31. 25, 6. 57; cf. 6. 7. 6-7, 6. 8. 4-5, 6. 9. 5-7.

sive behaviour on the part of the wealthier members of society.⁷³ Polybius, moreover, was not just imposing on Rome Greek ideas about imperialism. In 167 bc, Cato the Elder portrayed in the *Pro Rhodiensibus* the people of Rhodes perceiving Rome poised on the brink of being *the* unchallenged world power, awaiting only the elimination of Perses, a position which brought its own dangers:

Sed enim id metuere, si nemo esset homo, quem vereremur, quidquid luberet, faceremus, ne sub solo imperio nostro in servitute nostra essent.

But they feared that, if there was no one whom we feared, we would do whatever we pleased, and they would be under our sway alone, in slavery to us.⁷⁴

Just as in Thucydides' account of the Athenian debates concerning Mytilene, acquisition of empire on the part of the Romans brought with it the danger of hybriistic behaviour towards other peoples. But there is plenty in Cato too to parallel the bad behaviour on the part of the Roman élite which is described by Polybius. For Polybius, the 'leaders' of the people acquire the lion's share of the new wealth and use it to pursue a life-style which is directed towards 'courting the people', and which is at the same time invidious to the people. This behaviour is also problematic within the context of the élite, as the pressure to compete in conspicuous consumption is increased.⁷⁵ The 'people' who matter at this stage are surely primarily the army, and in Cato's speech regarding his conduct in Spain, he claims that he gave to his soldiers a pound of silver each, on the grounds that it was better for many to go home with silver than for a few to go home with gold.⁷⁶ This kind of statement surely represents acknowledgement of the people's consciousness that, if they have fought in a campaign, they deserve their fair share of the material benefits of that campaign. Increased interest in the means by which the wealth of office-holders was acquired and in the way in which it was used during the early part of the second century may also reflect some degree of acknowledgement of the consciousness of the 'people'.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Gell. 6. 3. 16 = *ORF*(4) no. 8. 164 = *Orig.* 5. 3b (Chass.). cf. Gell. 6. 3. 14 = *ORF*(4) no. 8. 163 = *Orig.* 5. 3a (Chass.) for the danger of *luxuria* and *superbia* accompanying success. ⁷⁵ 6. 57. 5.

⁷⁶ Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 10. 3 = *ORF*(4) no. 8, 54.

⁷⁷ F. Millar, 'The Political Character of the Classical Roman Republic', *JRS* 74 (1984), 1 ff.; id., 'Politics, Persuasion and the People before the Social War (150-90 bc)', *JRS* 76 (1986), 1 ff., for democratic tendencies in Roman politics of the second century bc.

At this stage, it is appropriate to wonder how much is new in the second century BC. By the Late Republic, there was disagreement as to when exactly to set the turning-point for the advent of moral, social and political corruption, but there was considerable agreement on the idea that the second century BC was the place to look for this turning-point.⁷⁸ Is there any reality in images of poverty and simplicity in the Middle Republic, as retailed within the ideology of the Late Republic and Early Empire? I shall argue below that it is possible to see signs of the importance of the promotion of an ideology of austerity on the part of Roman generals at the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century BC. This ideology of austerity has rather different overtones, however, from that promoted in the early second century BC: in particular, austerity of Roman individuals around 300 BC seems to be contrasted with the *tryphé* ('decadence') of Italian enemies, rather than with luxury within the Roman state. It is, then, possible that austerity was promoted as a positive value at one point during the Middle Republic. Such an ideology of austerity should not, however, be confused with actual poverty, or cultural backwardness: after all, austerity was also being promoted in the later fourth century by Tarentine Pythagoreans, and fourth-century Tarentum is hardly noteworthy for poverty and cultural isolation.⁷⁹ The sharp polarity between 'then' and 'now' within the ideology of early second century BC Rome is a construct. It is clear that Rome in the third century was culturally sophisticated, and one can see evidence of individual self-advertisement on a grand scale in the course of the third century, reflected in, for example, the attention devoted to the tombs and *elogia* of the Scipiones,⁸⁰ and the aims of the Lex Oppia to curtail women's display.⁸¹

⁷⁸ A. Lintott, 'Imperial Expansion and Moral Decline in the Roman Republic', *Hist.* 21 (1972), 626 ff. for the various turning-points preferred in the later Republic. His conclusion (638) that 'Gracchan propaganda' is behind the explanation of the political failure of the Republic in terms of moral corruption resulting from wealth and foreign conquest is, however, unacceptable. Polybius and Cato both conceptualize decline in precisely these terms. If Polybius cannot strictly be called pre-Gracchan, there is no doubt about Cato.

⁸⁰ *CIL* i 2nd edn., 2. 6. 7 = *ILS* 1 = *ILLRP* 309; cf. Zevi, 'L'elogio di Scipione Barbato' for ideological aspects of the *elogium*.

⁸¹ Livy 34. 1. 3: 'ne qua mulier plus semunciam auri haberet neu vestimento versicolori uteretur neu iuncto vehiculo in urbe oppidove aut proprius inde mille passus nisi sacrorum publicorum causa veheretur.' ('that no woman should have more than a half-ounce of gold, nor wear multi-coloured clothing, nor ride in a horse-drawn vehicle in city or town, or within a mile of one unless on public religious business.')

If images of poverty and simplicity in the Middle Republic are not matched by the material record, it is worth thinking of other reasons for the setting up of a rigid turning-point in the first half of the second century BC. It is interesting and suggestive that Polybius chooses the image of the disastrous battle of Cannae during the Hannibalic War against which to set his account of Rome at her peak.⁸² While Polybius reckons that Rome's three constituent political parts can hope not to overbalance in peace time, it is in the face of common danger from outside that he imagines these parts sticking most closely together.⁸³ Rome is at her most united, and at her social and political peak, when her back is against the wall. It is in this sort of situation that the exemplary actions of Horatius Cocles and Brutus are performed: personal sacrifice undertaken for the good of the state as a whole.⁸⁴ For Ennius too, Roman virtues and Roman unity are apparently admirably displayed during 'last-ditch' effort in warfare.⁸⁵ While new levels of wealth and power were clearly perceived by contemporary commentators to bring problems at Rome during the second century BC, it is interesting that the image of 'backs against the wall', pitched against the foreign enemy, symbolized for Polybius the antithesis of contemporary corruption. It is possible that the perception of contemporary problems owed something to a post-war feeling, images from the Hannibalic War being selected to emphasize the supposed equalizing effect of war.

Against this background of perceived problematic behaviour amongst the élite, members of the élite began to assert their avoidance of corrupt environments. Polybius describes the exemplary behaviour of Scipio Aemilianus as a young man: he goes out hunting in the countryside, and thus avoids the contemporary evil tendency of young and well-born Romans to stay in the city and indulge themselves in conspicuous consumption and the associated behaviour of 'courting the people'.⁸⁶ The city, where, presumably, conspicuous consumption would be most effective, was becoming increasingly problematized. Cato, in the Preface of the *De Agri Cultura*, addresses his audience, wealthy individuals who might be expected to be able to afford to buy the hundred-*iugera* farm which he recommends as the ideal size.⁸⁷ Farming is certainly recommended as a good and safe

⁸² Polyb. 6. 11.

⁸³ Ibid. 6. 18.

⁸⁴ 6. 34–5.

⁸⁵ *Ann.* 559 (Sk.), 'fortis Romani sunt quamquam caelus profundus' ('The Romans are as brave as the heavens are high'); 562 (Sk.), 'nec metus ulla tenet, freti virtute quiescunt' ('nor does any fear take hold of them: trusting to their valour they are calm').

⁸⁶ Polyb. 31. 25.

⁸⁷ For the hundred-*iugera* farm, see *De Agri Cultura* 1. 7.

business, unlike trading, an alternative business rejected on the grounds of its riskiness. But there are also important moral overtones associated with farming, and these moral overtones are an important part of the work as a whole:

at ex agricolis et viri fortissimi et milites strenuissimi gignuntur, maximeque pius quaestus stabilissimusque consequitur minimeque invidiosus, minimeque male cogitantes sunt qui in eo studio occupati sunt.

But from the stock of farmers come the bravest men and the most energetic soldiers, and farming produces the most honourable and most secure income, and the least invidious, and those who are engaged in it are the least dissatisfied.⁸⁸

The chosen means of making money should not only be secure, but should also avoid bringing ill repute to its practitioners. Usury and money-lending, activities which are both rejected on moral grounds,⁸⁹ might well be considered to be forms of abuse by the wealthy of the less well-off, perhaps instances of the 'grasping' behaviour of the élite and the subsequent resentment of the people which Polybius mentions.⁹⁰ What is, however, particularly interesting here is the connection between farming and soldiering. Although Cato's farmer is to be an absentee landlord,⁹¹ his life-style is assimilated to that of the peasant-farmer, and even the physical exertion associated with the latter becomes his. This Preface is surely not 'tacked on' to the rest of the work: there is throughout an emphasis on the master doing things with his own hands,⁹² and the morally laden language of physical exertion is important in the work of Cato as a whole.⁹³ This imagery

⁸⁸ For the hundred-iugera farm, see *De Agri Cultura* 1. 7., Preface, 4.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 1. ⁹⁰ Polyb. 6. 57. 7 for *pleonexia* ('greed').

⁹¹ *De Agri Cultura* 2. 1, 'pater familias ubi ad villam venit, ubi larem familiarem salutavit, fundum eodem die, si potest, circumeat . . . ' 'When the paterfamilias comes to the country-house, when he has greeted the household gods, let him make a tour of the farm that day, if he can . . . '

⁹² For e.g. the paterfamilias making sacrificial cakes and helping with the manuring, see *De Agri Cultura* 74-82. 5. Astin, *Cato*, 190 regards the Preface as irreconcilable with the rest of the work: 'it makes explicit reference to the type of the *colonus*, the peasant farmer working his own farm, whereas the book itself is not directed at all to this form of farming'; cf. 200-1.

⁹³ Cf. e.g. *Orig.* 3. 8 (Chass.), 'haut eos eo postremum scribo, quin populi et boni et strenui sient' ('I utterly refuse to write about people unless they are good and exert themselves'); *ORF*(4) no. 8, 18, 'maiores seorsum atque divorsum pretium paravere bonis atque strenuis, decurionatus, optionatus, hastas donaticas, aliosque honores' ('our ancestors gave a separate and different reward to those who were good and exerted themselves: cavalry commands, adjutancies, honorific spears, and other honours').

There is nothing in Cato himself to justify the belief of Wiseman, *New Men*, 111, that Cato's use of energetic vocabulary is to be related to his self-representation as a *novus*.

of non-demeaning physical labour is highly important within the discourse of decline associated with empire: moral rectitude is associated with physical labour on the part of individuals and entire states alike. Physical labour is a feature also of the images of equalizing 'last-ditch' effort in warfare which we have observed above, and Cato's image of farmer-soldiers may represent an attempt to replace the supposed equality of such battles with activity that can be carried out in peacetime as well: members of the élite should be farmer-soldiers just like the majority of their troops.

4. SABINE WORTHINESS

Cato in ea, quam scribesit de suis virtutibus contra Thermum: ego iam a principio in parsimonia atque in duritia atque industria omnem adulescentiam meam abstinui agro colendo, saxis Sabinis, silicibus repastinandis atque conserendis

Cato, in the speech which he wrote 'about his virtues, against Thermus': 'From my earliest days I kept myself away for the whole of my youth in frugality, hardship and hard work, by tending the land, the Sabine rocks, digging up the flints and planting'.⁹⁴

With Cato, a non-Roman landscape took on new overtones. For the first time, as far as we can tell, there was interest in the austerity of Sabines, or at least of their environment. Cato is here most probably drawing a contrast between his own exemplary youth and subsequent life, and the failings of Thermus. It is important to emphasize that, although Cato was later to be made an early member of the family tree of *novi homines*, it is surely not legitimate to read '*novus*-ideology' back to the early second century BC, and to interpret evidence such as this fragment of Cato as an early example of the claim of a *novus* to have superior moral credentials.⁹⁵ Claims to pursue a physically energetic life-style while avoiding corruption are likely to have been associated with model élite behaviour in the earlier second century BC without reference to the *novus/nobilis* polarity which is familiar from the pages of Cicero and Sallust.⁹⁶ It is important to

⁹⁴ Festus p. 350 L. = *ORF*(4) no. 8, 128.

⁹⁵ For Cato as a 'spiritual predecessor' of first-century BC self-proclaimed *novi homines*, see Wiseman, *New Men*, 107–10. It should remain an open question whether the ideology of *novitas* existed before the first century BC. Wiseman (111) is cautious about applying it to Marius himself.

⁹⁶ e.g. *BJ* 85 for Marius' *contio*.

emphasize the full force of the unusual use of *abstinui* here: the implication must surely be that Cato kept his *adulescentiam* away from something by his back-breaking activity on the land. The closest parallel here (albeit a very Greek-style one) is surely Polybius' Scipio Aemilianus avoiding the corrupt atmosphere of the city by going hunting.⁹⁷ In both the Cato fragment and the anecdote about Scipio Aemilianus, a non-urban environment is selected, along with a physically strenuous activity. Here, however, the rugged, non-corrupt environment has a name.

How much weight does *saxis Sabinis* carry in this passage? Plutarch has the tradition that Cato's family came originally from Tusculum but that Marcus himself was brought up on the family's Sabine estate.⁹⁸ The family, as well-to-do cavalrymen, conceivably had a variety of estates scattered around Rome. Certainly, by the time of the composition of the *De Agri Cultura*, Cato had intimate knowledge of the towns of southern Latium and northern Campania,⁹⁹ but there is obviously no way of knowing exactly when he came to acquire this kind of information. Cato may or may not, then, have been deliberately selecting the Sabine landscape from a number of alternatives. Even if he was not, however, this image of the rocky, non-urban landscape of Sabinum is striking, and it is worth looking for other clues about Sabinum as a special environment for Cato. Certainly, Servius thought that Cato traced Sabine austerity inherited by the Romans to the Sabines' supposed Lacedaemonian ancestry:

Cato autem et Gellius a Sabo Lacedaemonio trahere eos originem referunt. Porro Lacedaemonios durissimos fuisse omnis lectio docet. Sabinorum etiam mores populum Romanum secutum idem Cato dicit: merito ergo 'severis', qui et a duris parentibus orti sunt, et quorum disciplinam victores Romani in multis secuti sunt.

However, Cato and Gellius say that they derive their origins from Sabus the Lacedaemonian. Indeed, everything we read tells us that the Lacedaemonians were very tough. Cato also says that the Roman people followed the customs of the Sabines: so they truly deserve to be called 'austere', they who are both the offspring of tough parents, and whose disciplined life-style the Romans, their conquerors, have followed in many respects.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Polyb. 31. 29. ⁹⁸ *Cat. Mai.* 1. 1.

⁹⁹ For Cato's 'shopping-list', see *De Agri Cultura* 135.

¹⁰⁰ Serv. Auct. *Ad Verg. Aen.* 8. 638: 'Romulidis Tatíoque seni Curibusque severis' ('between the sons of Romulus, and aged Tatius and austere Cures').

I have discussed above the Tarentine 'fiction' of Spartan ancestry for the Samnites during the latter part of the fourth century BC.¹⁰¹ It is possible that the Sabines, as the Samnites' mythical ancestors in the Sacred Spring, were attributed Spartan ancestry in the same 'package' as the Samnites. But objections have sometimes been made to Servius' idea that Spartan Sabines appeared in Cato's work. In particular, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his account of versions of Sabine ancestries, might be understood to be saying that there are two distinct versions of Sabine ancestry: one, Cato's, in which the Sabines are descended from Sabinus, son of Sancus, and another, one of the 'local versions', in which a Spartan colony is involved in the early history of Sabinum.¹⁰² Certainly, the Servius passage and the 'local version' in Dionysius do not square exactly: the Servius passage talks about an eponymous Spartan founder, Sabus, who does not appear at all in Dionysius' 'local version'. It nevertheless remains possible, and even probable, that Cato made some kind of reference to the Spartan colony story. It is possible that he himself quoted 'local versions', as he does with regard to other Italian peoples in the *Origines*.¹⁰³ He is also obviously interested in pre-decadent, classical Spartans as models for Rome: he apparently used the Leonidas story elsewhere in a very positive context.¹⁰⁴ Objections to the Sabine-Spartan colonists story on the grounds that Cato wanted to assert the indigenous character of Italian peoples are misguided.¹⁰⁵

Whether or not Cato explicitly made the link between Sabines and Sparta, what is interesting in the *saxis Sabinis* speech is that this Sabine environment was expected to conjure up one image, and one image only: austerity and a non-corrupt environment. Yet alternative images of Sabinum certainly existed in antiquity. For example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus has a version of the story of Tarpeia,

¹⁰¹ See Ch. 1, s. 3 above.

¹⁰² *Ant. Rom.* 2. 49. 2 = *Orig.* 2. 21 (Chass.).

¹⁰³ e.g. *Orig.* 3. 4 (Chass.) for the version of the Thesunti Tauriani; 2. 1 (Chass.) for a thwarted attempt at an interview, 'sed ipsi unde oriundi sunt exacta memoria, inlitterati mendacesque sunt et vera minus meminere.' ('But they themselves have lost the memory of where they come from, are illiterate and liars, and scarcely ever tell the truth.')

¹⁰⁴ Gell. 3. 7. 1-19 = *Orig.* 4. 7 (Chass.).

¹⁰⁵ For this curious view, see Letta, 'I mores dei romani'. Cato in the *Orig.* in fact frequently mentions the Greek origins of Italian peoples: 2. 18 (Chass. numbering throughout): 'Intus coloniae Falisca Argis orta' ('inland are the Faliscan colonies founded by the Argives'). 2. 15: Greek-speaking Teutanes at Pisa. 2. 22: Lacedaemonian Sabines. 2. 24: Polites and the foundation of Politorium. 2. 26: Tibur founded by Catillus, prefect of Evander's fleet. 3. 2: Once a Lucanian Thebes. 3. 3; Petelia's wall built by Philoctetes.

answers the need for a figure of Nature in which to locate values supposedly vanishing in the Industrial era. His appearance as a positive figure in British ideology follows also the brutal suppression of the uprising of 1745, when this primitivism and independence are no longer sensed as threats to British cohesion. His distinctive 'traditional' kilt, a recent invention, which was banned in the mid-eighteenth century, was subsequently appropriated, adapted, and made the official uniform of the Highland Regiments of the British army.¹²⁰

While it is certainly likely that Varro was able to detect dialectal difference in contemporary Sabine speech, it is very much more doubtful that he was able to detect accurately all Sabine cultural contributions to Rome in the Regal period. Although there is no evidence to suggest that distinctive Sabine culture was suppressed by the Romans in any way that might be compared with the Highland Clearances of the mid-eighteenth century, it is doubtful that much remained of Sabine culture that could be recognized as such by Romans of the early second century BC, let alone by Romans of Varro's day. The myth of Sabine ethnic distinctness, however, was increasingly important in this era, enshrined by Rome.

This idea of 'special' Sabines seems to be turned on its head in a fragment of Lucilius. In this fragment, Albucius is rebuked by Scaevola for preferring to be addressed in Greek:

Graecum te, Albuci, quam Romanum atque Sabinum
municipem Ponti, Tritani, centurionum,
praeclarorum hominum ac primorum signiferumque,
maluisti dici.

You preferred to be called a Greek, Albucius, rather than a Roman and a Sabine, a fellow-townsmen of Pontius and Tritanus, centurions, famous men and distinguished standard-bearers.¹²¹

Certainly, 'going Greek' is being ridiculed here, and this kind of absurd and pretentious self-advertisement is frequently mocked in Lucilius as a 'sign of the times'. But the joke is surely more complicated here. In particular, it seems unlikely that sharing the

¹²⁰ For a fascinating account of this process, see M. Chapman, *The Gaelic Vision in Scottish Culture* (London, 1978), 13–23, 210; Trevor-Roper, 'The Highland Tradition of Scotland'; cf. McDonald, *We Are Not French!*, 2, for the need to establish national integrity before alternative identities within the nation become acceptable and even desirable.

¹²¹ 88–91 M.

origins of two individuals otherwise unknown to us, and of centurions and *signiferi* (ranks which are surely to be distinguished from high-ranking military commanders,¹²² would be something of which Albucius could seriously have been expected to be proud. For the idea that he would rather be considered to be Greek surely suggests that he harboured pretensions of associating himself with the kind of individuals who, our sources suggest, were most involved in 'going Greek': the Roman élite.¹²³ The joke has an added edge if being a Sabine was already loaded with a kind of moral specialness and was associated with the avoidance of exactly the kind of contemporary corruption of the élite at Rome of which 'going Greek' was held to be a symptom. The formula *Romanum atque Sabinum* is in itself interesting: perhaps it hints at a special pride in holding the Roman citizenship on the part of Sabines, a pride which could in turn be mocked as an indication of their *parvenu* status. If this is so, there would be a neat inversion here of the idea of special Sabines and their environment: Sabines are not worthy avoiders of corruption, but nobodies.

Such an inversion of more positive associations of Sabines might also have had a particularly up-to-date flavour in the last decades of the second century BC. If moral virtue had begun to be located outside the city of Rome by Cato, then a new ideology was available to wealthy and prominent 'outsiders' when they made their bids for office. If it were possible to be sure that Sallustian New Man Ideology originated with Marius himself, then he would be an excellent exemplar of the potential success of the ideology of the moral virtue of 'outsiders'.¹²⁴ It is important to remember also that, in the last few decades of the second century BC, there were increased moves to give the Latins the Roman citizenship. These increased opportunities may have encouraged resentment of 'outsiders' who were already enfranchised, such as Sabines and some Latins. There is direct evidence of anti-Latin feeling being whipped up by Gaius Fannius amongst the

¹²² Cf. e.g. Persius *Sat.* 3. 77–87 for centurions as anti-intellectual boors interested only in square meals; Hor. *Sat.* 1. 6. 73 for sons of centurions as big fish in a small pond.

¹²³ For 'going Greek' as letting down one's hair expensively, see e.g. Polyb. 31. 25; Plaut. *Most.* 22–4: 'dies noctesque bibite, pergraecamini, amicas emite, liberate: pascite parasitos: opsonate pollucibiliter.' ('Drink your days and nights away, go Greek, buy girlfriends, set them free: feed your parasites: spend a fortune on delicacies'). cf. Plaut. *Poen.* 600–3.

¹²⁴ For uncertainty about the authenticity of Sallust's Marius as a self-proclaimed *novus homo*, see D. C. Earl *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge, 1961), 28–40; Wiseman, *New Men*, 110–11.

Roman people,¹²⁵ but it would seem likely too that the older Roman élite might have sensed a threat to their ascendancy, particularly in view of the connection between 'outsider' status and moral virtue. It is interesting that, again in Lucilius, for the first time imitation and derision of a 'rustic' accent occurs within the context of office-holding: 'Cecilius pretor ne rusticus fiat' ('Let Cecilius not be rustic pretor').¹²⁶

Part of the joke here probably has to do with the *cognomen* of the Caecilii generally identified here, C. Caecilius Metellus Caprarius: Goatherd will be a *praetor rusticus* rather than a *praetor urbanus*.¹²⁷ But the joke might also have played on interest in differentiating between an urban Roman accent, and other Latin accents, which could have been particularly acute when the influx into Roman politics of new, Latin competition was on the horizon. With variations in accent, there would be a real difference which could be a focus of attention and distinction, the urban Roman accent being, predictably, the 'better' one. In this context, it may be significant that Cicero later complains of the affected 'rustic' accent of one L. Cotta.¹²⁸ The ideology of morally virtuous 'outsiders' came to be politically advantageous to some, and was resented by others.

5. INDIGENOUS ITALIANS

By the last few decades of the second century BC, new evils were perceived, relating particularly to slavery. It was once a modern orthodoxy to work into a wide-ranging economic model the testimony of Plutarch and Appian regarding the Gracchan reforms. These authors explain the motives of Tiberius Gracchus in terms of his desire to alleviate the distress caused by the replacement of free men by slaves on the land.¹²⁹ Within the hitherto popular modern

¹²⁵ Iul. Vict. 6. 4 = ORF(4) 32. 3. ¹²⁶ 1130 M.

¹²⁷ Cf. the joke about the praetor's *rostrum* (a snout like a goat's?) at 210–11 M.

¹²⁸ *De Or.* 3. 42: 'rustica vox et agrestis quosdam delectat, quo magis antiquitatem, si ita sonet, eorum sermo retinere videatur' ('Some like to adopt a countryfied, unpolished accent, with the object that their speech, if it sounds like this, may have a more old-fashioned ring to it'). Superior morality might be advertised in the Late Republic not only by means of such a 'rustic' accent, but also by a name. Wiseman, *New Men*, 257–8 comments that the cognomen *Sabinus* is sometimes used even by individuals who are demonstrably not from the Sabine region: 'with its connotations of ancient virtue, the name could be a moral as well as a geographical description'.

¹²⁹ Plut. *TG* 8. 3; cf. 8. 7; Appian *BC* 1. 7–9, 26–37.

model, the slave/free peasant polarity which is undeniably important in these accounts was felt to be crucial to the understanding of actual changes in land-use in the course of the second century BC. Signs of interest amongst the Roman élite in 'big business', whether agricultural or pastoral, such as we find in Cato, Varro, and Columella, were particularly noted.¹³⁰ Interest in 'big business' on the part of the Roman élite was seen in the context of the growth of capital following on from Roman imperial conquests.¹³¹ It was noticed that the agricultural writers presume that much of the work on the farms in question is to be done by slaves.¹³² This modern model was further encouraged by the moralizing complaints of Pliny the Elder and Seneca about *latifundia*. These *latifundia* were supposed to be a more precise term than the sources really suggest, were imagined to be a widespread phenomenon, and were retrojected into the second to first centuries BC.¹³³ Here, at first sight, was a comprehensible background for the reforms of Tiberius Gracchus: the expansion of the estates of the Roman élite, and their reliance on slave labour, had pushed out small farmers, who had migrated in large numbers to the towns of Italy, and to the city of Rome itself.

Serious doubts are now being raised about this hitherto popular modern scheme. In particular, archaeological evidence questions assumptions that the interests of the owners of large estates were necessarily opposed to the interests of the owners of small plots.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ e.g. K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge, 1978), 48 ff.; Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy*, ii, esp. 286–312.

¹³¹ e.g. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 48: 'The profits of empire, were the single most important factor in gradually building up the wealth of the Roman elite. A large portion of the profits taken out of the provinces was invested in land, especially in Italian land. Since the Roman upper classes got most of their regular income from land, a general increase in their wealth was necessarily accompanied by the formation of large estates.'

¹³² Ibid. 55; Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy*, ii. 296–7 for an extraordinary passage in which an imaginary 'literate Italian peasant' is reading Cato's *De Agri Cultura*, and 'would have started either laughing or grinding his teeth at the first line of Chapter I, and so he would have continued to the end if he had not thrown the book down, half read, in a rage.' These emotions would apparently have been induced by his reading about the slaves on the farms described in Cato's work.

¹³³ For careful discussion of ancient use of the term *latifundia*, see K. D. White, 'Latifundia', *BICS* 14 (1967), 62 ff.

¹³⁴ See e.g. M. W. Frederiksen, 'The Contribution of Archaeology to the Agrarian Problem in the Gracchan Period', *DDA* 4–5 (1970/1), 330 ff., D. B. Nagle, 'The Etruscan Journey of Tiberius Gracchus', *Hist.* 25 (1976), 48 ff., D. W. Rathbone, 'The Development of Agriculture in the *Ager Cosanus* during the Roman Republic: Problems of Evidence and Interpretation', *JRS* 71 (1981), 11 ff.

which he claims to have got from Fabius and Cincius, in which Tarpeia betrayed Rome because she was interested in the Sabines' bracelets and rings. These bejewelled Sabines occasion a comment from Dionysius:

χρυσοφόροι γὰρ ἦσαν οἱ Σαβῖνοι τότε καὶ Τυρρηγῶν οὐχ ἦτον ἀβροδίατοι

For the Sabines were wearers of gold at that time, and no less effete than the Tyrrhenians.¹⁰⁶

He apparently realizes the contradiction between these ornamented Sabines and more conventionally austere Sabines of Roman ideology, and attempts to explain this contradiction by suggesting that the Sabines have changed: the implication is that the Sabines were effete *at that time*, but are different now. The Etruscans, on the other hand, are apparently imagined to be a by-word for decadence for all time.¹⁰⁷ Images of Sabines not compatible with the later Roman stereotype of austerity are found elsewhere in Latin literature. According to another fragment of Fabius Pictor, the Romans first perceived wealth from the Sabines:¹⁰⁸ there is clearly no way of knowing whether he was referring to the 'Regal' period or to the more recent, third-century, Roman conquest. Titus Tatius is supposed by Ennius in the *Annales* to have been a tyrant, an institution more easily associated with decadence and immorality than with moral excellence.¹⁰⁹ Sabines were

¹⁰⁶ *Ant. Rom.* 2. 38. 3 = Fabius Pictor fr. 8 P., Cincius fr. 5 P.

¹⁰⁷ The static nature of Roman ideology relating to the Etruscans is striking, as if the Romans simply projected back in time their historical perception of Etruscan society. One should certainly be wary of reading back 'culture shock' to the Regal period, as does L. Bonfante Warren, 'The Women of Etruria', in J. Peradotto and J. P. Sullivan, *Women in the Ancient World: The 'Arethusa' Papers* (Albany, NY, 1984), 229 ff.

¹⁰⁸ Strabo 5. 3. 1 = 228 C = Fabius Pictor, fr. 90 P.: φησι δὲ συγγραφεὺς Φάβιος Ῥωμαίους αἰσθῆσθαι τοῦ πλουτοῦ τότε πρῶτον δε τοῦ ἔθνους τούτου κατέστησαν κύριοι ('The writer Fabius says that the Romans first became aware of wealth when they became masters of this people'). This fragment, if taken alone, is ambiguous (I am grateful to Dr. Tim Cornell for pointing this out to me): it is not clear whether the Romans became aware of their own wealth, or that of the Sabines. The latter is more likely, once this fragment is compared with fr. 8 P. concerning the effeteness of the Sabines in the Regal period.

¹⁰⁹ *Ann.* 104 (Sk.). For tyranny as a decadent form of government, see e.g. *Ar. Pol.* 4. 1295^a 17 ff. for the 'third type' of tyranny, cf. 5. 1315^b 11 ff.; Polyb. 6. 7. 8 for tyranny as a corrupt form of monarchy. For exemplary bad behaviour on the part of tyrants, see e.g. Herod. 5. 92 for Sosisicles of Corinth on tyranny, and esp. on Periander, who was advised in graphic form on government by Thrasylbulus of Miletus, and subsequently killed and banished all influential peoples in Corinth, crowning his despotic behaviour by stripping the women of Corinth to provide clothes for his dead wife Melissa, with whose body he had previously performed necrophilia.

evidently not always associated with frugality and *disciplina*, the kind of imagery which is clearly, and consistently, associated with them in Roman literature by the time of the Late Republic.¹¹⁰

Images of Sabine jewellery, wealth, and tyranny find close parallels in fifth-century Athenian images of Persia: wealthy, decadent, but also with a dangerous edge.¹¹¹ I would suggest that this is the kind of imagery by means of which enmity and subsequent conquest were explained, and, perhaps, justified. The problems associated with establishing a date for this ideological trend are considerable. Some modern scholars would prefer a date in the Regal period to a date around M'. Curius Dentatus' conquest of the Sabines, on the grounds first that the stories are focused on Cures, while Curius' activity is focused on the area of Sabinum further to the east of Rome. Secondly, the argument runs, the conquest in 290 was apparently not associated with an extensive degree of bad relations with the Sabines.¹¹² Indeed, it does seem improbable that such stories about the Sabines in the remote past should have been created from scratch in the Middle Republic. But equally it seems wrong to reject the possibility that such stories about the Sabines seemed to be of especial relevance in the early third century, inviting retelling and embellishment. The powerful tale of M'. Curius Dentatus' boast of the scale of his conquest of Sabines and their land certainly seems to indicate a Roman sense that the conquest was a crucial moment,¹¹³ and one that might well be expected to be accompanied by interest in the explanation of defeat, and the character of the defeated. In fact, images of opulence and tyranny seem, in view of contemporary interest in Italy in the Greek/barbarian polarity, much more likely to be an early third-century BC frame through which events were seen, rather than one that relates to the Regal period.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Livy 1. 18. 4 for Numa's character as proof of his Sabine rather than Greek origin: 'suapte igitur ingenio temperatum animum virtutibus fuisse opinor magis instructumque non tam peregrinis artibus quam disciplina tetrica ac tristi veterum Sabinorum, quo genere nullum quondam incorruptius fuit.' ('So I think his mind was moderated by his own innate spirit and virtues, and that he was influenced not so much by foreign knowledge, but rather by the austere and sober life-style of the ancient Sabines, no people being less uncorrupted than they once were.')

¹¹¹ For the 'invention' of the Persian character in fifth-century Athens, see Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 56 ff.

¹¹² Brunt, 'The Enfranchisement of the Sabines'; J. Poucet, *Recherches sur la légende sabinne des origines de Rome* (Louvain, 1967), 415 ff.

¹¹³ Torelli, *Rerum Romanarum Fontes*, 52–4 for sources.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Ch. 1, s. 4 above.

How was it possible to turn wealthy, decadent Sabinum into austere, pre-corrupt Sabinum? One might begin by considering the 'rough lands, rough people' stereotype which is important in ancient thought as early as Herodotus.¹¹⁵ The image of scraping away at the rough, rocky soil of the Sabine hills might well give one fine credentials of toughness and uprightness according to this stereotype. And yet, Roman Sabinum had a complex and varied geography, with a similarly divided earlier history. Modern attempts to connect the two very different images of Sabinum which occur in Roman ideology with lowland Sabinum on the one hand, as representative of decadence, and upland Sabinum on the other, as representative of austerity, are not successful either. Geographically and culturally, Sabinum does not split so easily into two halves,¹¹⁶ and this argument fails also to explain how, with Cato and subsequent Roman authors, one image alone, that of austere Sabinum, takes over. One example of this phenomenon, taken from *Aeneid* 8, is the depiction on the shield of Aeneas of war breaking out between Romulus' side and Titus Tatius *Curibus severis*:

subitoque novum consurgere bellum
Romulidis Tatiusque seni Curibusque severis.

and suddenly a new war was arising between the sons of Romulus, and aged Tatius and austere Cures.¹¹⁷

It may or may not be merely for reasons of metrical convenience that Tatius has become neutrally a *senex* here, rather than being styled a tyrant. What is, however, remarkable here is that Cures, in the heart of what would, on the analysis above, count for 'lowland' Sabinum, has become *severi*.

I suggest that the environment of first half of the second century is the place to look for the development of images of Sabine austerity.

¹¹⁵ Cf. n. 4, above.

¹¹⁶ D. Musti, 'I due volti della Sabina', *PSCS* (1985), 75 ff., attempts to explain the two sides of Roman ideological construction of Sabinum in geographical and historical terms: thus wealthy Sabinum is lowland Sabinum known to the Romans before the third century, while austere Sabinum is upland Sabinum known more recently. This explanation is over-simple. For one thing, it fails to explain why the image of austere Sabinum comes to predominate. For another thing, it does not take into account the complexity of the Sabine environment, increasingly revealed through archaeology (e.g. M. Cristofani Martelli, 'Per una definizione archeologica della Sabina: la situazione storico-culturale di Poggio Sommavilla in età arcaica', in *CASVT* (1977), iii. 11 ff.): the cultural geography (and, for that matter, the physical geography) of Sabinum cannot be reduced so easily into two constituent parts.

¹¹⁷ 637-8.

At this point, Sabinum could become such an effective anti-Rome, when an anti-Rome was first required in the early second century BC, partly because Sabinum had relatively recently been conquered and incorporated into the Roman citizenship. It is interesting that, alongside Sabine austerity and uprightness in Roman thought, images of Sabine distinctness remain. For example, there are the 'Sabinisms' catalogued by Varro, hints of a past in which the Sabines were imagined to be a culturally distinct entity, but also part of Rome's heritage, now imperfectly remembered.¹¹⁸ Romans focused also on strange, mystical aspects of Sabine religion, such as prophetic dreaming and augury.¹¹⁹ In the earliest Roman depictions of Sabines, such as those of Fabius Pictor and Ennius, there is a threatening and dangerous edge to Sabine foreignness, just as there is in depictions of various other Italian peoples in early Roman literature. After incorporation, hints of Sabine foreignness no longer seem threatening to Rome, however: there is no hint of the 'double-edged' aspect that Praeneste, for example, both rustic and boastful, apparently continued to have for Rome. The fact that Sabinum was safely incorporated means that Romans could now both accept and idealize this sense of foreignness. Sabine distinctness comes to embody all the positive aspects of being outside the corrupt city of Rome, seat of empire.

An interesting parallel to this ideological process is found in the development of British images of the Gaelic Highlander. For us today, he is a familiar figure with his kilt, bagpipes, and caber, emblems of his distinct cultural identity. With his wild aspect, he is a figure of admirable toughness, primitivism, and independence. This ideological construct goes back to the latter part of the eighteenth century, and

¹¹⁸ It is not obvious that Varro had any clear notion of what the Sabine language was, as opposed to dialectal variation which might be heard in contemporary speech. See *LL* 7. 28 for his belief that the Sabine and Samnite languages were related, and *LL* 5. 74 for the idea that Pales, Vesta, Salus, Fortuna, Fons, and Fides were taken from the Sabines 'with small changes', a vague-sounding notion. J. Poucet, *Les Origines de Rome* (Brussels, 1985), 80 for a sceptical approach to supposed linguistic evidence for joint Sabine involvement at Rome in the Regal period.

For full discussion of the difficulties associated with the classification of the Sabine language/languages, see Ch. 5, below.

¹¹⁹ Festus' comment (p. 434 L.) on the proverb 'Sabini quod volunt somniant' ('let the Sabines dream about what they want') is badly mutilated, but such fragments as remain seem to point to the importance of prophetic dreaming in Sabine religious ritual; Gnaeus Gellius (fr. 7 P.) has the Sabines learning from Megale Phryge the art of augury. For a full discussion of the religious peculiarities focused on in Roman constructions of peoples of the Central Apennines, see Ch. 4, below.

The polarity between free farmers and slaves which emerges in Plutarch's and Appian's accounts of the reforms of Tiberius Gracchus can no longer be understood as simple echoes of changes in land-use in the course of the second century BC. Nevertheless, anxiety about the numbers, proportions, and origins of slaves appears several times in 'quotations' from contemporary individuals. For example, after the death of Tiberius Gracchus, Scipio Aemilianus was, according to Velleius Paterculus, asked to comment by the tribune C. Papirius Carbo on his murder. When the crowd was outraged by Scipio's reply, he replied that he would not be intimidated by those for whom Italia was a mere *noverca*. This comment was surely a slur on the character of the present company as freedmen or slaves not born in Italy.¹³⁵ I would suggest that the foreignness of slaves was felt to be a cause for concern on two counts. On the one hand, slaves had no 'stake in the land': the idea of the unreliability of soldiers who had nothing to lose, and who had no 'roots' was important in Roman ideology.¹³⁶ How much worse were men who were inherently alien and even hostile to Rome. This aspect of slavery was likely to have been uppermost in Roman minds during the Sicilian slave-wars, when actual rebellion was a reminder of the potential danger of slaves. Another reason was that slaves could be regarded as just another fancy imported item, like the luxurious goods with Greek names which proliferate in second century Roman literature, possessions which could be flaunted by the élite in a divisive and disruptive way.¹³⁷

Another important piece of evidence is Gaius Gracchus' anecdote about his brother's journey to Numantia through Etruria, where Tiberius reputedly observed the emptiness of the land and fact that those labouring on the land were imported, foreign slaves.¹³⁸ This anecdote cannot be used to support claims that Tiberius had any active

¹³⁵ V.P. 2. 4. 4 cf. P. A. Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays* (Oxford, 1988), 243.

¹³⁶ e.g. Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 254.

¹³⁷ Polyb. 31. 25. 5a, claiming to be quoting Cato: ἐφ' οἷς καὶ Μάρκος <ἀθανακτῶν> εἶπε ποτε πρὸς τὸν δῆμον ὅτι μάλιστ' ἂν κατίδοιεν τὴν ἐπὶ <τῷ> χεῖρον προκοπὴν τῆς πολιτείας ἐκ τούτων, ὅταν πολλοῦμενοι πλεῖον εὐρίσκωσιν οἱ μὲν εὐπρεπεῖς παῖδες τῶν ἀγρῶν, τὰ δὲ κερᾶμια τοῦ ταρχίου τῶν ζευγηλατῶν. ('Angry at these things, Marcus Cato one said in a public speech that they could really regard the state as having gone all the way downhill, when pretty-boys were being sold for more than land, and jars of caviar for more than ploughmen.')

¹³⁸ Plut. TG 8. 7: ... καὶ τὴν ἐρημίαν τῆς χώρας ὁρῶντα καὶ τοὺς γεωργούντας ἢ νέμοντας οἰκέτας ἐπεισάκτους καὶ βαρβάρους ('and seeing the land deserted, and that the farmers and herdsmen were imported barbarian slaves'). cf. J. Rich, 'The Supposed Manpower Shortage of the Late Second Century BC', *Hist.* 32 (1983), 287 ff., 303-5 for contemporary anxiety regarding the proportions of slaves to free men.

interest in doing something for Italians in general as opposed to Roman citizens, but, against the background of the Sicilian slave-wars, is a neat illustration of the way in which anxiety about slaves at this time might be manipulated in Roman politics. Particular aspects of slaves, such as their foreignness and their supposed inability to contribute usefully and reliably to the state in ways that counted might be focused on in order to point up the claims of one's proposed beneficiaries, whether these were, in Tiberius' case, Roman citizens, or, in Gaius' case, Latins and Italians.¹³⁹

The fact that Plutarch claims that the anecdote concerning Tiberius was to be found in a pamphlet written by Gaius Gracchus is interesting, and one might well wonder whether this anecdote suited Gaius' aims rather than those of Tiberius. According to a sympathetic later source, the Social War broke out as a result of the perceived unfairness of supplying the majority of arms to a state in which the Italians had no political share.¹⁴⁰ It seems reasonable to suppose that, in making proposals concerning the status of Latins and Italians, Gaius pointed to the usefulness of non-Roman peoples, the primary example of their usefulness surely being their provision of troops. As we shall see, after the Social War, one of the most important virtues for which peoples of the Central Apennines are praised is their association with warfare and soldiering.¹⁴¹ Census figures from this period do actually show that this area was a particularly important producer of troops: local social structures must clearly have yielded a large number of free peasants, unlike the more oppressive systems operative in Etruria. Slaves, on the other hand, were apparently not numerous: the local élites seem to have put their money into public building rather than into private adornment.¹⁴² This particular Roman interest in Italians

¹³⁹ J. S. Richardson, 'The Ownership of Roman Land: Tiberius Gracchus and the Italians', *JRS* 70 (1980), 1 ff., argues that Italians were to benefit from Tiberius' land-reforms by receiving the Roman citizenship; this argument is ingenious, but fails to account in a satisfactory fashion for (a) Cicero's belief that Tiberius 'sociorum nominisque Latini iura neclexit ac foedera' ('neglected the rights and treaties of the allies and those of Latin name', *De RP* 3. 29. 41 cf. *ibid.* 1. 19. 31) and (b) the discontent of the allies regarding land-redistribution after the activity of Tiberius (*Appian* *bc* 1. 19).

¹⁴⁰ V.P. 2. 15; cf. Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 120–1 on the burden of Italian and Latin military contributions. ¹⁴¹ Cf. n. 4 above.

¹⁴² P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 BC–AD 14* (Oxford, 1971), 54, Table 5 for calculations of free inhabitants of various regions of Italy in 225 BC. The proportion of free persons to land amongst the Samnites is very much higher than in Etruria. Brunt (55) points out that in 1936 the area that was once 'Samnite' was similarly more densely populated than rural Tuscany. However, in ancient Etruria, the population was surely

of the Central Apennines in general does not emerge until after the Social War, but I would suggest that it is possible that the more general Roman discourse of autochthonous Italians¹⁴³ first appeared around the 120s BC. If so, it appeared against a background of discussion of the citizenship, and against the background of a sharpened polarity between Romans and non-Romans. Italian claims could be highlighted by concentration on the importance of their contribution of troops to Rome, and by emphasis on the existence of necessarily free men, in contrast to the growing numbers of slaves and freedmen in the city. Once there was growing anxiety about foreignness, the Roman discourse of barbarian Italians could be turned around. If being barbarian implies that one has no real stake in the Greek world, then the 'flip-side' of this idea is that one is worthily indigenous.

6. DISQUIETING LANDSCAPE: SAMNITES AND MARSI IN FOURTH- TO SECOND-CENTURY ROMAN IDEOLOGY

While the discourse of Sabine worthiness/worthlessness was developing in the course of the second century BC, such worthiness/worthlessness was not yet extended to the peoples of the Central Apennines as a body. In Cato's *Origines*, Mount Fiscellus, identified as Gran Sasso, the mountain that rises sharply from the landscape of northern Abruzzo, is inhabited by amazing jumping goats;¹⁴⁴ the landscape is

boosted by the high proportions of slaves, and, originally, *penestai* (whose status *vis-à-vis* the army is unclear: Dionysius 9. 5. 4 believes that they served in the army, a belief which is doubted by Brunt), both in towns and in the land: Plut. *TG* 8. 5; Strabo 5. 2. 6–9; Livy 28. 45; D.S. 5. 40. 3 for the luxury of the Etruscans and their slaves; with Brunt, *op. cit.*, 55.

The Samnites probably had far fewer slaves: the large free population presumably supplied plentiful free labour; La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 242–3 points out the concentration in Samnium on putting wealth into public building of a civil and military character, rather than in buildings of a private nature. He also suggests that local building techniques may suggest the use of free rather than slave labour, although this is clearly open to conjecture. The apparent lack of success enjoyed by Samnites and Marsi in entering the Senate after enfranchisement may suggest not so much the overall poverty of these regions (Wiseman, *New Men*, 25–6), but rather their (for the ancient world) comparatively equal social organization. I discuss this aspect in greater detail in Ch. 3.

¹⁴³ Cf. e.g. Varro *RR* 3. 1 for country people as the only ones left over from the stock of Saturn; Virg. *Aen.* 12. 823 for 'indigenas . . . Latinos'; Strabo 5. 3. 1 = 228 C for indigenous Sabines.

¹⁴⁴ *Orig.* 2. 20 (Chass.); for the identification of Mount Fiscellus with Gran Sasso, see Salmon, *Samnium*, 363; F. Coarelli and A. La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise* (Guide archeologiche Laterza, Rome, 1984), 14.

wild, but there is no suggestion that this is a morally laden landscape in the way that Sabinum had become. Second-century Roman interest was rather directed towards the strange customs and exoticism of this region. According to Solinus, the late second-century writer Gnaeus Gellius told of three daughters of Aeëtes: Angitia, Medea, and Circe. Circe settled down in the Circeian mountains, practising her evil transforming spells; Angitia went to live in the area of the Fucine lake, and practised curing snake-bites; Medea was buried by Jason Buthrotius, and her son ruled over the Marsi.¹⁴⁵ In the previous chapter, I suggested that the comparatively early Greek genealogy of western Italians, descended from Odysseus and Circe, was a reflection of Greek experience of colonization in Tyrrhenian Italy, and encounters with local peoples.¹⁴⁶ What is interesting about the Gnaeus Gellius fragment is that, while Circe remains on the west coast, there is Roman interest in the location of her sisters Angitia and Medea further to the east. These disquieting mythical women with magical powers are located in the Central Apennines. Elsewhere in Gellius, the Lydian origins of the Marsi were commented upon, and this detail also suggests a sense of exoticism.¹⁴⁷ Interest in the special snake-charming powers and the ability to heal snake-bites is a striking and persistent feature of Roman portraits of the Marsi. For example, Lucilius, possibly in the course of describing someone about to pop after stuffing himself with food, likens the scene to a *Marsus* making snakes burst open through his singing.¹⁴⁸

Regarding the Samnites, as we saw in Chapter 1, Livy's account of the Battle of the Caudine Forks seems to resonate with ideological themes of late fourth-century Hellenistic Italy. Pontius Herennius, now an old man, gives sound advice within an account in which Livy alludes to older tradition. His part in this story fits in well with the role attributed to him in Cicero's *De Senectute*, and it seems plausible that these hagiographical traditions go back to the late fourth-century context of Tarentine Pythagoreanism in which the passage from Cicero is explicitly set.¹⁴⁹ It seems likely too that

¹⁴⁵ Fr. 9 P. = Solinus 2. 28. ¹⁴⁶ Cf. Ch. 1, s. 1 above.

¹⁴⁷ Fr. 8 P. = Pliny *NH* 3. 108: the Marsic town Archippe was drained from the Fucine lake and founded by Marsyas, king of the Lydians; for the exoticism of Lydians in ancient discourse, see e.g. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 149–50.

¹⁴⁸ 575–6 M.: 'iam disrumpetur medius, iam, ut Marsus colubras | disrumpit cantu venas cum extenderit omnes.' 'Now his midriff bursts, just as a Marsus makes snakes burst when he has made all their veins stand out with his singing.'

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Ch. 1, s. 3 above.

Livy's two major accounts of the Samnite armies, first in the battle of 310 that ended in defeat for the Samnites, and secondly in the formation of the 'linen legion' at Aquilonia in 293, carry elements of contemporary ideology.¹⁵⁰ While there is certainly a degree of schematism within the account, it would surely be rash to conclude that the entire episode of the 'linen legion' was an invention by Livy.¹⁵¹

One key passage, Livy 9. 40, in which the bizarre and resplendent war-dress of the Samnites is described, was analysed very effectively by Rouveret. She suggested that, while there were certainly reflections within the account of Augustan Rome, as well as possible reflections of the Social War, the passage also contains plausible reflections of the reality of late fourth-century Samnite armies, which may be compared with contemporary iconographical representations and grave-goods, seen through a framework that makes perfect sense within the context of late fourth-century ideology. In other words, real elements of contemporary Samnite war-dress and practice have been selected out and exaggerated within recognizable patterns of thought. For example, while resplendent arms are certainly a feature of contemporary southern Italian war-dress, within this account, some of the Samnites are decorated with gold, to emphasize associations with luxury. While contemporary paintings show tunics which are white, red, and *versicolores*, the Samnites wear variously white and *versicolores*, extremes of inappropriate colours for battle-dress, in contrast with the Romans, clad, by implication, in appropriate red.¹⁵² To take an example from the second passage, the special religious ceremony presided over by the priest Ovius Paccius, and involving the following of a ritual contained in an ancient linen book, and the self-dedication of a special élite, has parallels in other accounts of archaic warfare in situations of dire necessity. In this account, however, it has become a sinister black-magic ceremony, involving a bizarre mixing-up of elements, and the sacrilegious mingling of human and animal sacrificial victims.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Livy 9. 40 and 10. 38.

¹⁵¹ Salmon, *Samnium*, 182 ff. rejects unnecessarily various aspects of the account e.g. the linen books, and the name of the priest, Ovius Paccius.

¹⁵² 9. 40; cf. A. Rouveret, 'Tite-Live, Histoire Romaine IX, 40: la description des armées samnites ou les pièges de la symétrie', in A. Adam and A. Rouveret (eds.), *Guerre et sociétés en Italie (V-IV s. avant J-C)* (Paris, 1986), 91 ff.

¹⁵³ 10. 38. 5 ff.; cf. 10. 39. 16 for the speech of L. Papirius. Cf. Rouveret, n. 152 above, 106 ff.

Within these accounts, the Samnites are cast as barbarians. Elements of primitivism seem to be emphasized here, most particularly the use of linen, and the wearing of one greave only.¹⁵⁴ The Samnites are, however, to be distinguished from the more straightforward primitives of ancient thought. For example, Tacitus' Germans do not know what to do with the silver vessels which are given to them: in their semi-blessed state of ignorance, they treat them as if they were no more than clay pots, whereas Livy's Samnites put their precious armour to a spectacular effect that is only heightened by the deliberate parallelism of the account.¹⁵⁵

What is the history of this ideology of Samnite barbarians? It is certainly tempting to relate some of the fear inspired by this account to the environment of the Social War, and Sulla's subsequent activity in Samnium, a relatively recent event for Livy and his audience. But clearly, some of the details of this account are far older than this, and belong rather to an archaic context. As for the ideology of Samnite barbarians, while the discourse of luxury is indeed important particularly within the context of early Roman literature, I would suggest that there is an entirely plausible context for opulent barbarism within the late fourth century to early third century BC.

While, as we have seen, the theme of Greeks versus barbarians is of great importance during this period, so too, more specifically, are images of luxury versus austerity. In this context, one might think of hagiographical traditions of M'. Curius Dentatus, and various of his contemporaries, renowned for their austerity. For example, according to one 'type' of the tradition, the Roman general is found refusing wealth offered variously by Sabines and Samnites, preferring to rule over the wealthy rather than to have wealth himself. It might be objected that there is evidence to suggest that Cato the Elder was particularly interested in M'. Curius Dentatus, and that such stories resonate to such an extent with the issues with which he himself was concerned that he himself must have been the author of them.¹⁵⁶ I would certainly not deny that Cato had a substantial amount to do with the history of the tradition, but equally I would not want to deny parallels between late fourth-century themes of austerity and *tryphé*,

¹⁵⁴ Rouveret, n. 152 above 103 ff.

¹⁵⁵ Tac. *Germ.* 5. 4.

¹⁵⁶ Cic. *De Sen.* 55 cf. Auct. *Vir. Ill.* 33. 8-9; Val. Max. 4. 3. 5; Pliny *NH* 19. 87; cf. the same story attributed also to Fabricius Luscinus by Val. Max. 4. 4. 6. For a catalogue of stories about worthy Roman heroes of the Middle Republic, see Harris, *War and Imperialism*, 264-5.

and traditions about the Samnites on one hand, and Roman generals on the other.

It is very suggestive indeed that it was the Samnites for whom the Tarentines, fellow enemies of Rome, 'invented' traditions of Spartan ancestry, with overtones of austerity desirable specifically within the context of Tarentine Pythagoreanism of the late fourth century bc.¹⁵⁷ It seems perfectly plausible that Romans in the late fourth to early third centuries should have expressed thoughts about themselves as conquerors within a framework of ideas about conquest established in fifth-century Greece: the terms in which Curius Dentatus refuses the gold of the Samnites or Sabines find their closest parallel in Herodotus' account of how Cyrus came to take over the kingdom of Croesus.¹⁵⁸ But images of austerity—of the winning side, of course—have an added resonance against the background of contemporary Tarentine ideology. Rome too had its leaders in the tradition of Tarentine Pythagoreanism, notable both for their wisdom and for their ability in warfare.¹⁵⁹ On this hypothesis, Rome's conflict with the Samnites was originally set not only in the terms of Greeks versus barbarians, but also of depiction of the enemy as the antithesis of the worthy descendants of the Spartans they represented within Tarentine ideology.

It seems likely that images of barbarian Samnites continued to be important within Roman ideology of the second century bc, as did the portrayal as barbarians of other peoples of the Central Apennines, and Italians in general, at certain times in particular suiting Roman purposes. For example, images such as these are compatible also with traditions about Italian complaints of their treatment by the Romans in the decades preceding the Social War. According to Velleius Paterculus, one of the reasons why the Social War broke out was that the Italians felt that they were despised by the Romans as 'extremos alienosque', rather than being admitted by them into the citizenship.¹⁶⁰ Certain Romans were associated with taking up, or fuelling, the Italian 'cause'. For example, according to Appian, Fulvius Flaccus in 125 bc excited amongst the Italians the desire to be partners rather than subjects.¹⁶¹ Fragments of Gaius Gracchus'

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Ch. 1, s. 4 above.

¹⁵⁸ Herod. 9, 122: 'The Persians . . . chose to rule while living on poor land, rather than to be slaves to others while living on plainland.'

¹⁵⁹ For traditions of early Roman involvement in Pythagoreanism, see e.g. Mele, 'Il pitagorismo'.

¹⁶¹ BC 1. 34. 152.

¹⁶⁰ V.P. 2. 15. 2.

speeches suggest that he criticised overbearing behaviour on the part of Romans in allied towns.¹⁶² One strand in the Roman tradition about the years immediately preceding the Social War, then, is Roman treatment of Italians effectively as subject peoples. It is, then, not so surprising that we should find that images of some of the peoples who were to rise against Rome have much in common with figures of barbarians in ancient thought. It is as well to emphasize the fact that relations between Rome and her allies at this period are extremely complex, and are reflected in the complexity of the ideological traditions: in some contexts, the Italians who rose against Rome were considered to be, or felt themselves to be treated as, no more than barbarians; in other contexts, some Italians were considered to be admirably indigenous, in contrast with the foreign slaves increasingly perceived to be a negative feature of Roman society.

The images of peoples of the Central Apennines discussed above build up to suggest a sense of considerable unease, which is reflected also in evidence of Roman attitudes during and immediately after the Social War. According to Appian, the ambiguous saying, 'no victory without or against the Marsi'¹⁶³ was in existence before the Social War: the implication of power which could be used either with or against Rome is disturbing. But Sulla's activity against the Samnites in 82 bc is surely the best indication of the fear which the Samnites held for the Romans, or, at the very least, the fear which could be manipulated in order to justify Sulla's harsh action:

And to those who found fault with him for such excessive wrath he said he had realised from experience that not a Roman could ever live in peace so long as the Samnites held together as a separate people.¹⁶⁴

7. INCORPORATING THE OUTSIDERS: *SABELLI* AND THE SOCIAL WAR

Some time after the action of Sulla against the Samnites, a new ethnic was apparently coined by the Romans. At least, the name *Sabellus*

¹⁶² *ORF*(4) no. 48. 48-9 = Gell. 10. 3. 2 ff.

¹⁶⁴ Strabo 5. 4. 11 = 249 C.

¹⁶³ Appian *BC* 1. 46.

used as an ethnic first occurs in Varro,¹⁶⁵ and this timing is not, I would suggest, accidental. The term could clearly be used by ancient authors to refer to both Sabines and Samnites, and this new ethnic cannot fail to put emphasis on perceived connections between Sabines and Samnites.¹⁶⁶ Despite the confusing modern use of 'Sabellian' and 'Sabellie', the Romans never used *Sabellus* to refer to the more northerly peoples of the Central Apennines, such as Marsi and Paeligni. *Sabellus* is used in contexts such as Horace *Odes* 3. 6,¹⁶⁷ where one could reasonably expect to find the metrically identical 'Sabine': Horace is, after all, talking about the stalwart heroes of the Middle Republic, who are unlikely to be found farming amongst the Samnites. Why does Horace use the wider term *Sabellus* in this context? Salmon explained the appearance of the ethnic *Sabellus* thus:

It was in his [Varro's] day, the period of the Social War, that need was felt for some generic term to describe all of the distinct and physically separated peoples who spoke Oscan. It was no longer possible to call them all simply by the blanket term 'Samnites', since this name had acquired pejorative associations and moreover had the precise and definite meaning of 'inhabitants of Samnium'. To lessen the possibility of misunderstanding Roman antiquarians brought into vogue the term *Sabelli*, meaning 'Oscan-speakers'.¹⁶⁸

This explanation is unsatisfactory, especially in view of the fact that *Sabellus* could clearly be used with reference to Sabines as well as Samnites. Salmon is elsewhere well aware that written evidence from

¹⁶⁵ Varro *Men. fr.* 17 (Astbury) = Serv. Auct. *Ad Georg.* 2. 168: 'de Sabellis Varro in Age modo sic ait:

terra culturae causa attributa olim particulatim
hominibus, ut Etruria Tuscis, Samnium Sabellis'

('About the Sabelli, Varro in "Age modo" says this: "Once upon a time the land was assigned to specific peoples to cultivate, such as Etruria to the Tusci, and Samnium to the Sabelli"').

Livy 41. 4. 6 attributes to C. Popilius, an *eques*, the cognomen Sabellus. Nothing is known about the origins of this individual, but it is tempting to see his cognomen as a 'tamed' version of his perceived Samnite origins, to fit his identity as a Roman citizen.

¹⁶⁶ In the following passages *Sabellus* can only mean 'Sabine': Hor. *Odes* 3. 6. 38; Virg. *Aen.* 8. 510 (these passages are significantly omitted by Salmon, *Samnium*, 32 nn. 3-4: he asserts that 'when ancient writers meant "Sabine", they used the word *Sabinus* and *Sabellus* being metrically identical'). This is clearly not always the case; either Sabines or Samnites: Virg. *Georg.* 2. 167; Samnites: Serv. *Ad Georg.* 2. 167; Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C; Pliny *NH* 3. 107; Hor. *Sat.* 1. 9. 29, 2. 1. 36; Livy 8. 1. 17, 10. 19. 20. See, further, Appendix B, pp. 223-6.

¹⁶⁷ Line 38.

¹⁶⁸ Salmon, *Samnium*, 32-3.

Sabinum suggests that, at the very least, Oscan had not been spoken here for a very long time.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, it is very odd that the Romans should be supposed to be avoiding the 'pejorative associations of Samnites' through the coinage of *Sabelli* if in fact the Romans' austere chosen ancestors, the Sabines, were being directly associated with the rebellious Samnites in this very ethnic. It is necessary to ask why this was so. I shall argue below that local myths, the Sacred Spring myths, had already stressed the relationship between Sabines and Samnites, but what is important to note here is that there is no sign of *Roman* interest in this theme until the time of Varro.¹⁷⁰

As we have seen, there is a tendency in early Latin literature to seek to represent Rome as more culturally advanced than the rest of Italy, a construction which is at odds with the portrayal of various threatening Italian peoples, such as Sabines, as wealthy and bejewelled. In the case of Praeneste, laughing at the local, 'rustic' accent may have been a way of 'cutting her down to size', minimizing the sense of political and cultural threat which she represented. In the case of the Sabines, Roman conquest and incorporation meant that they no longer constituted any threat to Rome. In this sense, Sabinum was clearly inferior to Rome, and a desirable simplicity could be safely located there. During the second century, Sabinum was also such a convincing antithesis of Rome precisely because it was perceived to have a culture, or at least the remnants of a culture, which was sufficiently different from Rome, in a way that the Latins did not. But Sabinum was also culturally relatively close to Rome, and surely increasingly so, in the obvious sense that, for example, the language spoken in recent times was Latin—albeit with dialectical variations¹⁷¹—and the Roman citizenship was, by the early first century BC, obviously more long-standing than it had been a century before. The closer to Rome the Sabines were perceived to be, the less satisfactory they would be as the antithesis of Rome.

As a result of the enfranchisement of the peoples of the Central Apennines such as the Marsi and Paeligni, and of Sulla's violent

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 31.

¹⁷⁰ For the *ver sacrum* with assorted animal-leaders, see Varro *RR* 2. 16. 29; Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 16. 4; Pliny *NH* 10. 40; Festus p. 93 L.; Serv. *Ad Aen.* 11. 785.

¹⁷¹ For problems in the identification and classification of Sabine, see ch. 5, ss. 4–5 below.

action against the Samnites in the course of the 80s BC, these areas could become a moral resource for Rome. With regard to the Samnites, it is interesting that it is the 'Sabelli' who come to have the most positive associations, rather than the Samnites alone, the most resilient and dangerous Italian allies of Rome. It is as if, through this new ethnic, the Sabines take on an added aura of foreignness and simplicity from the Samnites, without absorbing less desirable and anti-social qualities of the Samnites, such as their precivilized aspect as *montani atque agrestes* and as *Opikoi*, the worst of all Italian barbarians. The linguistic difference, and the austerity of the Sabines were emphasized by association with peoples such as the Pentri, occupying the highest parts of the Central Apennines, people who were using Oscan even in public documentation right up to the Social War. While the full impact of Samnite foreignness was apparently filtered through the more familiar Sabines in the creation of the ethnic *Sabellus*, it is interesting too that the distinctive character of Samnite society was much diminished through a variety of factors during the Augustan period, at which time *Sabelli* are frequently idealized. It is as if it is more comfortable to recreate the foreignness of the recent past than to make reference to a present foreign reality.¹⁷²

The Marsi and Paeligni remain witches and snake-charmers, but this expression of their difference may have a less sinister aspect when they are no longer dangerously on the margins of Roman control, or even at war with Rome. Certainly, Virgil's reference to *fortissimus Umbro*, the Marsic snake-charmer and snake-bite healer, seems a poignant lament for a magical closeness to the old gods of the land which is threatened by the arrival of the Trojans.¹⁷³ The Marsi, Paeligni, and *Sabelli* are now representatives also of a desirable masculinity, valiant providers of troops for Rome, a service which can be safely acknowledged when it is no longer feared that such power will be used against Rome.¹⁷⁴ The emphasis on the masculinity of Sabines, *Sabelli*, Marsi, and Paeligni after their incorporation is very interesting: this masculinity represents acknowledged power which is expected to be used reliably and in a controlled way in the interests of Rome. Manliness of this straightforward and reliable variety is never found amongst unincorporated barbarians: Tacitus'

¹⁷² e.g. Strabo 6. 1. 2 = 253-4 C for the Samnites' loss of cultural identity with regard to tribal organization, language, armour, and clothing. Cf. Ch. 3 s. 3 below, for changes in social organisation particularly in the Augustan period.

¹⁷³ *Aen.* 7. 750-60, ending with a half-line; *Aen.* 12. 766-71 for the episode when the Trojans uproot a tree sacred to Faunus. ¹⁷⁴ cf. n. 4 above.

Germans, for example, are strong but unpredictable and prone to drunkenness and violence, tolerant of cold and hunger, but not of heat and thirst, and they deteriorate steadily into brutes the further removed they are from Rome. They have some virtuous qualities, but are not safely in service to Rome.¹⁷⁵

8 POSTSCRIPT

By the time of Tacitus, austere senators showing up the vices of the Julio-Claudians are found not only amongst Italians, but even amongst enfranchised provincials. They are free from the imported vices ever increasing in the city, but are quite distinct from 'Northern Barbarians' who are total outsiders, like Germans. These austere individuals are unaccustomed to sycophantic behaviour: their hands tire easily at the performances of Nero, and they herald the beginning of fashionable frugality when they arrive in greater numbers in the train of Vespasian, the Sabine emperor.¹⁷⁶ It is even possible for potential, rather than actual, senators to provide an austere commen-

¹⁷⁵ Tacitus' Germans have some of the positive values of the pre-corrupt e.g. *puclitia* (19), ignorance of the uses of amber amongst the Suiones, who gather it only for *luxuria nostra* (45. 5); there is, nevertheless, a highly negative side to their character: e.g. 4. 3 for their lack of tolerance of heat and thirst; 22. 2 for drunkenness and violence. R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), ii, 531, underrates this negative aspect: he describes the work as an 'idealised, conventional, and nostalgic portrayal of virtue and integrity among the strong and untainted'.

¹⁷⁶ *Ann.* 16. 5: 'sed qui remotis a municipiis severaque adhuc et antiqui moris retinente Italia, quique per longinquas provincias lascivia inexpecti officio legationum aut privata utilitate adveniant, neque aspectum illum tolerare neque labori inhoneste sufficere, cum manibus nesciis fatiscerent, turbarent gnaros ac saepe militibus verberarentur, qui per cuneos stabant ne quod temporis momentum impari clamore aut silentio segni praeteriret.' ('But those who had come as legates or on private business from far away towns and Italy, still austere and preserving old-fashioned ways of life, and those who, through the remoteness of their provinces, were not used to licentiousness, could neither bear the sight of it, nor could they manage the degrading task: their inexperienced hands grew exhausted, they annoyed the trained applauders, and were often beaten by the soldiers, who were stationed in the aisles in case a moment went by when the shouts of acclaim were ill-regulated, or a sluggish silence came over the audience.')

Ann. 3. 55. 8 ff.: 'simul novi homines e municipiis et coloniis atque etiam provinciis in senatum crebro adsumpti domesticam parsimoniam intulerunt, et quamquam fortuna vel industria plerique pecuniosam ad senectam pervenirent, mansit tamen prior animus' ('At the same time new men from the towns and colonies, and even the provinces, were accepted into the senate in numbers, and brought in with them their home-grown frugality, and although most attained wealth in their old age—by good fortune or hard work—yet their former inclination stayed with them'). In this second passage, note the way in which worthiness may spread even to the provinces, and also the language of physical exertion, which has been so important right through the development of the ideology of Italian worthiness, from Cato onwards.

For Vespasian in particular, see Suet. *Vesp.* 1–2; 12.

potential, rather than actual, senators to provide an austere commentary on the decadence of Imperial Rome.¹⁷⁷ From the second century BC onwards, the figure of the incorporated and tamed outsider was an increasingly familiar feature of Roman ideology.

¹⁷⁷ *Ann.* 13. 54. 4 for the Frisian ambassadors Verritus and Malorix at the Theatre of Pompey in AD 58: seeing foreigners sitting amongst the senators, and hearing that these people have earned this privilege through the courage and loyalty of their states, the Frisians display commendable, old-fashioned pride in themselves by insisting on joining them.

PART II
LOCAL SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION TO PART II: LOCAL SOCIETY

No continuous ethnographical account of peoples of the Central Apennines survives in ancient literature to compare with the accounts of the Etruscans in Athenaeus or Diodorus. However, there are many shorter notices, which indicate interest in the distinctive features of local society in the Central Apennines. I have chosen to discuss these under the headings of 'Mountain Society', 'Religion', and 'Questions of Identity'. Obviously, features of local society are selected by the observing society, and viewed through its own intellectual frameworks. However, interest in specific details of local societies, and in depicting individual societies in particular ways remains striking, and suggests that the categories chosen by Athenian or Roman society were not arbitrary. In the section that follows, I explore the possibility that images of local society that appear in Greek and Latin sources might be more than reflections of the preoccupations of Greek and Roman society. Differences which are noticed by one culture might in some way be important in the self-definition of the other culture, or in the self-definition of a narrower group within it. One motif may have different functions within each culture.

Mountain Society

INTRODUCTION

In the present chapter, the first task is to identify what were really the preoccupations of ancient authors: for example, it will become clear that modern preoccupation with pastoralism in the Central Apennines is not echoed by ancient authors for our period. Ancient authors were, however, interested in the mountainous landscape of the Central Apennines, the social organization of the area, and in the effect of the environment on moral character. When peoples of the Central Apennines were incorporated within the Roman citizenship, it became possible for their 'rough landscape' to function as a moral ideal for the city of Rome. In the final sections of this chapter, I shall consider evidence which suggests that the social structure of the Central Apennines was rather different from that in the much more profoundly urbanized areas of Tyrrhenian Italy. In particular, I shall suggest that patterns of élite behaviour were perceptibly different in the Central Apennines before enfranchisement, and that this difference may have helped to encourage the images of austerity and hardship associated with this area in the literary sources.

1. SHEEP AND CULTURAL MODELS

The pastoral aspect of the economy of the Central Apennines has been much emphasized in modern literature, and sheep-keeping in this area has attracted most attention. A predominantly pastoral economy has frequently been postulated in these areas for prehistory and protohistory,¹ and still more for the Hellenistic and Roman

¹ See e.g. S. M. Puglisi, *La civiltà appenninica* (Florence, 1959), where the separate character of prehistoric pastoral society in the Central Apennines is emphasized throughout; G. Barker, 'The Archaeology of the Italian Shepherd', *PCPS* 215 (1989), 1 ff., 6-9, for a useful summary of developments in modern scholarship; G. Barker, 'The Conditions of Cultural and Economic Growth in the Bronze Age of Central Italy',

periods.² Furthermore, the type of pastoralism practised in these areas is generally supposed to have been mobile, either nomadic (a model usually restricted to discussions of prehistoric pastoralism)³ or transhumant. Transhumance is the seasonal exploitation of two or more complementary pastures, one situated in the plain or valley floor (for autumn or winter pasturage), and the other situated on the mountain, at higher altitude (for summer pasturage). It is conventional to distinguish between horizontal (or Mediterranean) transhumance and vertical (or Alpine) transhumance.⁴ More recently, however, a distinction between long-distance and short-distance transhumance has been preferred, not least because 'horizontal' transhumance tends to be 'vertical' as well,⁵ as in the use of Samnium and Apulia as complementary grazing lands. Having short-distance transhumance as a category also serves to emphasize the importance of enterprises which were on a smaller scale. Mobile pastoralism in its various forms is frequently used in modern literature to explain broader cultural phenomena: for example, patterns and types of settlements and the formation of groups, cultural contacts with other parts of Italy, or, in the form of 'big business' particularly when associated with individuals, the accumulation of wealth best represented by the third- to early first-century BC rural sanctuaries of the Central Apennines.⁶

Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society 38 (1972), 170 ff.; G. Barker, 'Prehistoric Society and Economies in Central Italy', in E. S. Higgs (ed.), *Palaeoeconomy* (Cambridge, 1975), 111 ff., for the complexity of the situation in prehistory; M. Pasquinucci, 'La transumanza nell'Italia romana', in E. Gabba and M. Pasquinucci (eds.), *Strutture agrarie e allevamento transumante nell'Italia romana (II-I sec. a.C.)* (Pisa, 1979), 81 ff., 93-4 for suggestions of specialist pastoralism in pre- and proto-history.

² Pasquinucci, 'La transumanza', 92 ff. for the classic thesis of developments in third to second centuries BC.

³ For the Paeligni, see Van Wousterghem, *Superaequum, Corfinium, Sulmo*, 35; for the idea of the myth of the *ver sacrum* as an illustration of nomadism amongst the peoples of the Central Apennines, see Letta, *I Marsi*, 25.

⁴ Pasquinucci, 'La transumanza', 79-81 for definitions of transhumance.

⁵ P. Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies in Southern Europe: Thoughts on the Early History, Continuity and Individuality of Mediterranean Upland Pastoralism', in C. R. Whittaker (ed.), *Pastoral Economies in Classical Antiquity* (PCPS Suppl. 14, 1988), 196 ff., 201-2.

⁶ e.g. E. Mattiocco, 'I centri fortificati nel contesto delle culture pastorali', in *Centri fortificati preromani nel territorio dei Peligni* (Sulmona, 1981), for Paelignian hilltop settlement explained in terms of mobile pastoralism; Salmon, *Samnium*, 50-2, for settlement in Samnium 'athwart the drovers' trails'; C. Letta, "'Oppida", "vici", "pagi" in area marsa: l'influenza dell'ambiente naturale sulla continuità delle forme di insediamento', in M. Sordi (ed.), *Geografia e storiografia nel mondo classico* (Milan,

Ideas of the predominantly pastoral economy of the Central Apennines have also been used to account for some of the images of this area which recur in Roman literature: poverty, marginality, and non-urban settlement. It is therefore necessary to reassess evidence—literary, documentary, and material—on the basis of which many have argued that pastoralism gave to the Central Apennines a special character.

(a) Ancient Literature

Within Greek and Roman ethnography, considerable attention is paid to the types of farming practised by other peoples. The variety of agriculture or pastoralism (or, indeed, a mixture of both) practised is one aspect of the broader interest in the themes of 'geographical determinism' and human development.⁷ The connection between pastoralism and primitivism is one which is made frequently in antiquity: according to this view, pastoralism is characteristic of a pre-civilized existence, and may either represent a former stage in a now civilized society like Rome, or be used to characterize other societies in a negative way.⁸ Conversely, agriculture is linked with an ideal stage of development: civilization without decadence. Within Roman ideology of the Late Republic and Early Empire, small farmers are of particular moral importance: they live staunch lives away from corrupting contemporary influences, and make excellent soldiers.⁹

1988), 217, for non-urban scattered settlement amongst the Marsi explained partly in terms of transhumant pastoralism. For the idea that the 'emergence' of the various tribes of the Central Apennines in the fourth century BC was linked to the 'evolution' from nomadism to regulated transhumance, see Van Woutherghem, *Superaequum, Corfinium, Sulmo*, 36, 41. E.g. Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 185, for connection between pastoral 'big business' and the rural sanctuaries.

⁷ Cf. in general R. F. Thomas, *Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition* (PCPS Suppl. 7, 1982), 1 ff. For a discussion of the 'environmental factor' in Livy, see T. J. Luce, *Livy: The Composition of his History* (Princeton, 1978), 276 ff.

⁸ e.g. Ar. *Pol.* 1256^a 31 ff.; Varro *RR* 2. 1. 1–5 for the primitive origins of animal husbandry; Propertius 4. 10 for the end of civilization as represented by the image of shepherds grazing their sheep on the site of Veii. B. D. Shaw, 'Eaters of Flesh, Drinkers of Milk', *Ancient Society*, 13–14 (1982–3), 5 ff., for an excellent discussion of ancient views of mobile pastoralism; C. Ampolo, 'Rome archaïque: une société pastorale?', in Whitaker, *Pastoral Economies*, 120 ff., for criticism of images of early Rome as a pastoral society.

⁹ e.g. Cato *De Agri Cult.* Preface 2; Hor. *Odes* 3. 6. 37 ff.; Livy 2. 26. 9 for Cincinnatus at his plough; Cic. *De Off.* 1. 150–1, 2. 89 for notorious comments on the moral worth of various types of work.

It should be emphasized that, despite modern preoccupation with pastoralism in the Central Apennines, there is very little explicit interest in this aspect of local society within ancient literature. I have cited above in full the notorious passage of Livy (9. 13. 7), within which the Samnites are portrayed as *montani atque agrestes*, pitched against the despised people of Arpi: 'campestris et maritima loca contempto cultorum molliore atque, ut evenit fere, locis simile genere . . . depopulabantur'.¹⁰ This passage has generally been read either as a description of Samnite society 'as it was' in antiquity, or as characteristic of Roman perception of Samnite society. On either reading, there is emphasis on the poor, pastoral, and non-urban aspect of the Central Apennines, in contrast with the richer, agricultural aspect of the lowland area.¹¹ Both of these views are, however, problematic. For one thing, it is far from obvious that Livy is contrasting two different varieties of economy here: there are ways of contrasting agriculturalists with pastoralists in Latin which are clearer than *agrestes* versus *culti*.¹² The contrast implied here is more obviously that between the rough and non-urbanized people of the mountains and the 'softer' people of the plains. For another thing, Livy is precise about the time he is talking about: *ea tempestate* must refer to the late fourth century BC, and cannot therefore be taken as a general reference to Samnite society in the Late Republic and early Empire. Above all, however, this particular passage of Livy is very 'pointed': here is 'geographical determinism' in its most explicit form, used to highlight the conflict between the people of Arpi and the Samnites. Livy's characterization of the Samnites during the Samnite Wars has, as we saw in Chapter 2, many facets, and portrayal of them as *montani atque agrestes* should not be privileged over, for example, the depiction of them in their gold and silver

¹⁰ 9. 13. 7; cf. *Introd.* above for translation.

¹¹ For various uses of Livy's *montani atque agrestes*, see e.g. Salmon, *Samnium*, 77, 'It is hardly surprising that these deprived mountain-dwellers should be consistently represented as covetous of neighbouring and better lands'; Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, 'Classical Landscape', 43; 'From the classical writers we can do little more than generalise that pastoral systems predominated in the upper valley and arable systems in the lower valley. Livy characterised the Samnite people as *montani atque agrestes* (9. 13. 7) and Salmon's study reaffirms the tradition of a rustic backwater thinly populated especially by shepherds and herdsmen'; Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 180, cites the passage in support of his statement, 'It would appear that in antiquity the conditions of life in the highlands were hard.'

¹² A. Giardina, 'Uomini e spazi aperti', in E. Gabba and A. Schiavone (eds.), *Storia di Roma*, iv: *Caratteri e morfologie* (Turin, 1989), 71 ff., 76-7 for discussion of the meaning of *agrestes* here.

armour,¹³ or his accounts of the large amounts of booty gained by the Romans as the result of sacking Samnite towns in the Third Samnite War.¹⁴

Apart from this notorious passage of Livy, there is very little in ancient literature which positively invites association of peoples of the Central Apennines with pastoralism. Nevertheless, modern pre-occupation with pastoralism has apparently prompted scholars to read references to it into a variety of negative Greek and Roman notices on the area. This interpretation has presumably been encouraged by the fact that pastoralism is often associated with a negative variety of primitivism in ancient literature. The possibility that indications of negative primitivism amongst the peoples of the Central Apennines might have to do with something other than pastoralism is not always canvassed, despite the fact that there is no specific reference to pastoralism in the passages under consideration. Thus, for example, Frayn, who emphasizes the distinctive and separate character of shepherd-communities, explains Strabo's 'down-grading' of Samnite towns on the 'sheep routes' in terms of his sources being 'unfavourable to pastoral communities and unappreciative of their life-style'.¹⁵ When Torelli argues that the Samnite economy was not 'purely' pastoral, he begins by citing Livy's reference to 'nefarium latrocinium Samnitium, belligerum genus' ('the Samnites, an abominable band of robbers, a belligerent people'), suggesting that this passage is characteristic of the ancient literary sources as a whole. He interprets this passage as a depiction of a social structure which was substantially pastoral, manifested in the form of incursions and raids, and then challenges this view with a more complex picture of Samnite economic activity.¹⁶ There seems, however, to be no reason why 'nefarium latrocinium' should necessarily be a reference to pastoralism. Furthermore, as we have seen already, Livy's portrayal of the Samnites is not one-sided. As we shall see later, it would be even more misleading to view images of 'nefarium latrocinium Samnitium, belligerum genus' and 'montani atque agrestes' in isolation and to consider them as representative of ancient literary evidence concerning peoples of the Central Apennines.

¹³ Livy 9. 40. 1-4; cf. Ch. 2, s. 7 above.

¹⁴ Livy 9. 40; cf. 10. 39. 11-14.

¹⁵ J. Frayn, *Sheep-Rearing and the Wool Trade in Italy During the Roman Period* (Liverpool, 1984), 71.

¹⁶ Livy 7. 30. 12; M. Torelli, 'Per il Sannio tra IV e I sec. a.C.: note di archeologia', in *Sannio* (1984), 27.

Elsewhere in modern scholarship, specialist pastoralism has, until comparatively recently, been generally regarded as a kind of economic 'last resort': various scholars comment on the natural poverty of the Central Apennines in terms of agricultural and mineral resources, concluding their discussion of the local economy with images of mobile pastoralism and the struggle for new grazing lands, supposedly illustrated by the Sacred Spring myths and the Samnite Wars.¹⁷ The connection between pastoralism and poverty seems implicit in these accounts, and one might well be reminded of the topos of poverty which recurs in satirical references to peoples of the Central Apennines in literature of the Late Republic and early Empire.¹⁸ The connection between pastoralism, poverty, and economic marginality was most seriously challenged by Pasquinucci in 1979. She drew attention rather to the 'big business' aspect of pastoralism, illustrated most eloquently in literary sources for the second century onwards, by documentary sources for the early Empire onwards, and by comparisons with the Dogana delle Pecore system under the Kingdom of Naples in the sixteenth to early nineteenth centuries. Her work coincided with the large-scale reassessment of local society and cultural horizons which owed most to the work of La Regina in the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁹ Within this general model, however, there still remained room for emphasis on the special character of local life imposed by a mainly pastoral economy. This approach is illustrated most clearly by Frayn's chapter on 'Shepherd Communities: A Social Anomaly'.²⁰

(b) *Questioning Modern Preoccupations*

I have suggested that explanations of cultural and moral phenomena in the Central Apennines in terms of pastoralism are very much less

¹⁷ Letta, *I Marsi*, 88: 'certamente per i popoli dell'alto Appennino, e per i Marsi in particolare, quasi del tutto privi di terre coltivabili, lo stabilizzarsi pacifico della transumanza deve risalire all'inizio del III secolo e deve considerarsi come un vantaggio economico' ('certainly for the peoples of the high Apennines, and for the Marsi in particular, almost entirely deprived of cultivable land, the peaceful establishment of transhumance must date back to the beginning of the third century, and must be considered as an economic advantage'); for explanation of the Sacred Spring myths in terms of overpopulation and the need to seek 'fresh woods and pastures new', see Salmon, *Sannium*, 35-6.

¹⁸ See Ch. 3, s. 2 (c) below.
¹⁹ See esp. La Regina, 'Insediamenti vestini'; id., 'Centri urbani'; id., 'I territori sabellici e sannitici'; id., 'Il Sannio'.

²⁰ Frayn, *Sheep-Rearing*, 66 ff.

obvious in ancient literature than might be imagined if one reads the work of some modern scholars. It is possible also to use archaeological and comparative evidence to suggest that pastoralism *per se* did not give to the Central Apennines a separate and distinctive character such as could be remarked on by Greek and Roman authors.

Recently, there has been a reaction against models which rigidly oppose pastoral and agricultural systems, and the subtler models proposed seem to be well supported by archaeological survey of the Central Apennines. From comparative evidence, it emerges that pastoralism is very rarely practised exclusively, not least because animal-rearing alone is not an economical way to use land, nor is the consumption of animal products alone an efficient way of gaining sufficient calories.²¹ Furthermore, despite ancient beliefs, exclusive pastoralism, which is inevitably mobile to some degree, is not a feature of economically primitive societies, but generally takes place within the context of a highly developed economy, not least because such specialization is a highly risky business.²² Ideas of 'environmentally determined' long-distance transhumance practised continuously from prehistoric times through into the modern period can no longer be endorsed by appealing to archaeological or comparative evidence.

Within these recent studies, the 'big business' side of pastoralism, which surely involved some degree of specialization, is not, however, denied. 'Big business' pastoralism in ancient Italy, the variety of pastoralism within which long-distance transhumance is most likely to have been practised, is now generally considered to have been a response to particular historical and social circumstances, rather than to have been determined by environmental factors alone.²³ Long-distance transhumance was considered in antiquity to be hazardous, and is labour-consuming, requiring the absence of valuable manpower

²¹ W. Goldschmidt, 'A General Model for Pastoral Social Systems', in *Pastoral Production and Society/Production pastorale et société* (Paris and Cambridge, 1979), 15 ff., 16; M. L. Ryder, *Sheep and Man* (London, 1983), 646; Whittaker, in id., *Pastoral Economies*, 1 ff. For calculations of the number of sheep required to feed the 'reference family', see G. Dahl and A. Hjort, *Having Herds* (Stockholm, 1976), 140-1; 220 Table 9.5.

²² Whittaker, in id., *Pastoral Economies*, 4; J. Cherry, 'Pastoralism and the Role of Animals in the Pre- and Protohistoric Economies of the Aegean', in the same volume, 16-17; Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies', 203-4.

²³ Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies' 203-4; Whittaker, in id., *Pastoral Economies*, 2-4.

for a good part of the year. Varro puts into the mouth of Cossimus advice to prospective buyers of livestock to make a clear distinction between shepherds hired to look after sheep on the farm, and shepherds hired to accompany sheep on the *calles* ('livestock trails'). The latter group of shepherds should be fit young men, and should be armed.²⁴ Long-distance transhumance also involves the loss of dung, a valuable fertilizer. Comparative evidence suggests that farmers can resort to various strategies in order to keep livestock on the farm all the year round without practising transhumance of any kind: for example, animals may graze under vines and olives, be turned into harvested fields, manuring them in the process, or even be fed on leaves and weeds within their stalls. Transhumance, whether long- or short-distance, is likely to be practised only when the flock is too large to be kept adequately on the farm, either because the farm is very small, or because the flock is very large.²⁵ When transhumance does need to be practised, short-distance transhumance is likely to have been the more inviting option: the sheep might in this case be watched even by a child,²⁶ and this option would be particularly effective in an environment such as the Central Apennines, where different altitudes, and consequently different climatic conditions, are found at comparatively close distances.

Doubts remain about the degree of specialization there might have been before the second century BC, but it is certainly true to say that the evidence from the second century BC concerning Italy in general is less circumstantial than it is for the earlier period, although even from this period, the evidence is nothing like as substantial as that from the Imperial period. According to Pasquinucci's thesis, large-scale pastoralism is a phenomenon which really takes off after the Hannibalic War. This thesis is based partly on the view that only after the Roman conquest of Italy could stable political conditions favour long-distance transhumance, which would involve travelling through the territories of different peoples, and that big business was favoured by the confiscation of land in the territory of the allies. It is also based partly on the view that large pastoralist ventures were favoured in this period because of the growth of capital, and increases in the numbers

²⁴ Varro *RR* 2. 10. 1–4.

²⁵ Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies', 206–7; J. Thompson, 'Pastoralism and Transhumance in Roman Italy', in Whittaker, *Pastoral Economies*, 213 ff., 214.

²⁶ Varro *RR* 2. 10. 1, 'non modo pueri sed etiam puellae' ('not just boys but also girls').

of slaves as a result of Roman imperialism.²⁷ Certainly, specialist pastoralism is not denied for the third century: Livy has notices of the fining of *pecuarii* ('livestock breeders') for 296 and 293 BC, although we do not know where these individuals had their flocks.²⁸

For the second century BC, there is considerably more information available concerning specialist pastoralism in Italy. Livy has further notices of the fining of *pecuarii* for 196 and 193 BC.²⁹ *Coniurationes* ('plots') on the *pascua publica* ('public pasture-land') apparently involved large numbers of *pastores* ('shepherds') in Apulia in 185–184 BC: the *praetor* L. Postumius is said to have condemned about seven thousand men.³⁰ Various sayings attributed to the Elder Cato also indicate the perceived importance of animal husbandry amongst the Roman élite in the first half of the second century BC.³¹ The earliest explicit reference to transhumance is the *lex agraria* of 111 BC, in which numbers of animals which could be grazed on the *ager publicus* are regulated, and in which the *calles* and *viae publicae* ('public roads') are also subject to regulations.³² Even here it is, however, important to point out that there is no way of knowing the distances that were being travelled along the *calles* and *viae publicae*: mention of *calles* and *viae publicae* is not in itself positive evidence for long-distance transhumance.

Direct evidence of local individuals in the Central Apennines profiting from 'big business' pastoralism before the Social War is thin on the ground. The author of the Polla inscription, found in the Vallo di Diano in Basilicata (ancient Lucania), mentions not only his part in the building of the road from Rhegium to Capua and his part in returning fugitive slaves to their masters in Sicily, but also his part in making shepherds yield to *aratores* on the *ager publicus*:

²⁷ Pasquinucci, 'La transumanza', 94; Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies', 199. See also Whittaker, in id., *Pastoral Economies*, 4 for emphasis on the growing needs of the Roman army.

²⁸ Livy 10. 23. 13; 10. 47. 7; Pasquinucci, 'La transumanza' (1979), 93 supposes that these *pecuarii* were active on *ager publicus* not far from Rome, although they may at other times have been using complementary pasture-land in the mountains.

²⁹ Livy 33. 42. 10; 25. 10. 11–12.

³⁰ Ibid. 39. 29. 8–9.

³¹ Cic. *De Off.* 2. 89; Pliny *NH* 18. 29–30; Colum. 6, Preface 4–5; for Cato 'quoted' as saying that both pastoralism and agriculture are admirable activities, see Serv. *Ad Aen.* 7. 539; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 4. 6, 21. 5.

³² *FIRA* i, no. 8, 14–15 for regulation regarding the number of animals and the payment of the *scriptura*; 19–20, 26 for the incidental pasturing of animals on the *calles* and *viae publicae*.

eidemque
 primus feci ut de agro poplico
 aratoribus cederent paastores.

And I too was the first to make shepherds yield to ploughmen on the public land.³³

Although this inscription is tantalizing, it tells us little about the local situation. For one thing, it is far from clear that, when the author tells of his treatment of the *paastores*, he is talking about the situation in Lucania: the order and arrangement of the inscription suggest rather that this activity took place in Sicily. Even if this inscription does refer to the situation in Lucania, however, it tells us nothing about the scale of pastoralism, or the extent of specialization. Later references tend to be used in reconstructing the situation in the Central Apennines before the Social War. Varro's famous reference to long-distance transhumance is much used, presumably because of his explicit mention of *Samnium*:

Itaque greges ovium longe abiguntur ex Apulia in Samnium aestivatum atque ad publicanum profitentur, ne, si inscriptum pecus paverint, lege censoria committant.

Thus flocks of sheep are driven from Apulia all the way to Samnium for summer pasture, and are declared to the tax-collector, so that, in case they should fear their flock is unregistered, they may not come into conflict with the censorial law.³⁴

While this does seem to be a reference to relatively 'big business' and transhumance as a regular feature of pastoralism on this scale, it is worth noting the direction in which sheep are said to be driven. This is not good evidence for Samnite *pecuarii*. The other piece of literary evidence which is much cited in discussions of pastoralism in the Central Apennines is Cicero's *Pro Cluentio*, in which *pecuarii* associated with Larinum appear significantly after the Social War.³⁵ It will be seen that, although it seems right to suppose that developments after the Social War to some extent continue trends which can be traced within the second century BC, the world of the mid-first

³³ CIL x. 6950. I owe to Michael Crawford the idea that this passage relates to Sicily rather than to southern Italy.

³⁴ Varro RR 2, 1, 16; on the use and abuse of this passage, see J. P. Morel, *Romanisation* (1991), 187 ff., esp. 200 ff.

³⁵ *Pro Cluentio* 198, 'iam qui in agro Larinati praedia, qui negotia, qui res pecuarias habent, honesti homines et summo splendore praediti . . .'

century BC is a substantially different one from that of the second century. For another thing, it may not be advisable to be too hasty about making generalizations about upland Molise on the basis of evidence concerning Larinum, a town whose social and economic development is very distinct from the rest of the Frentane area, let alone from Samnium, from the end of the fourth century onwards.³⁶

There are certainly signs of the enrichment of individuals in the Central Apennines from the later second century onwards: signs of private wealth in Saepinum and Monte Vairano are particularly suggestive in this context. The best evidence of conspicuous wealth is, however, still found in the rural sanctuaries of Samnium in particular. However, while individuals, generally magistrates, are clearly associated with the stages of building of these sanctuaries, and while certain gentilicial names recur frequently in these inscriptions, it is as well to admit that we simply do not have good epigraphic evidence to answer conclusively questions about the extent to which building was actually funded by individuals or by communities as a whole.³⁷ We know still less about the kind of economic activity which funded these sanctuaries: pastoralism, agriculture, trading, the profits of empire, or rather a combination of all four?

Similarly, finds of hill-top shelters, votive offerings and cult-places on or near routes later criss-crossed by *tratturi* known from later periods tell us nothing about the scale of 'big business' practised by members of the élite within the Central Apennines, nor even about the size of small-scale pastoralism.³⁸ Even if *tratturi* known from later

³⁶ On the complex situation of Larinum and the Frentani, see La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali nel mondo sannitico', *Sannio* (1984), 178.

³⁷ It is worth emphasizing the fact that there is little positive evidence for the funding of parts of the rural sanctuaries in Samnium by individuals.

In Ve. 149, referring to Temple A at Pietrabbondante, a *keenstur* (whose name is lost) is said to have *duunated* something (the identity of the gift is lost).

Ve. 154, referring to Temple B has been much discussed: 'd(ekis). staatiiis. l(úvkefs). klar.- (?) . d. pestlúm. úpsann[úm]'. The lacuna between *klar.* and *.d* renders the nature and extent of the individual's action very uncertain. La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 233, 244-5, cf. id., 'I territori sabellici e sannitici', 457, fills the lacuna with [*súvad étiuva*]d (*sua pecunia*). He argues that this is preferable to the alternative [*senatels tanginú*]d (*senatus sententia*), on the grounds that the formula [*senatéis tanginú*]d is, in Oscan inscriptions from Samnium, inevitably accompanied by the verb *prüfatted* (i.e. *probavit*), which is absent in this inscription. Even if La Regina is right about this, however, he now admits that *pestlúm* is more likely to be the Oscan equivalent of *podium*, rather than meaning 'temple' as he originally supposed. If this is the case, then the contribution of the individual would be significantly smaller than La Regina once thought.

³⁸ For the popularity of Hercules in the highest zones of the Central Apennines, see Van Wouterghem, 'Le Culte d'Hercule', Di Niro, *Il culto d'Ercole*.

periods could be demonstrated to follow the old routes (the *calles*), there is no reason to believe that these routes were used exclusively for the passage of sheep, let alone to believe that they were used exclusively for long-distance transhumance. Nor, indeed, can the obvious popularity of Hercules in the Central Apennines, as exemplified most clearly by the statuettes of the god found very commonly within this region, be used to tell us anything about the scale of pastoralism or the degree of specialization. Within the ancient world, Hercules was a supremely adaptable god, with many functions. It is worth emphasizing the fact that in the second-century BC Agnone tablet, which details the dedication of statues and altars to numerous deities in the heart of Samnium, Hercules appears as *Herek-lúí Kerríúí* (*Herculi Cereali*), an epithet attributed to several other gods in the tablet, and one which is most unlikely to refer primarily to a concern with the generation of livestock.³⁹ It is also surely a possibility that the connection of Hercules with cattle was important in the Central Apennines, as it was in Tyrrhenian Italy.⁴⁰ One might think, for example, of Hellanicus' version of the naming of Italy after Hercules' *ouitoulos*.⁴¹ Cattle were apparently of ideological importance to the Samnites specifically: a bull is their animal leader in the Sacred Spring,⁴² while analysis of bones from Pietrabbondante suggests that a high proportion of cattle was sacrificed at this sanctuary,⁴³ a centre for all of those who called themselves 'Samnites' during the second century BC. Lastly, the Samnite bull appears trampling the Roman wolf on coins issued by the insurgent allies during the Social War.⁴⁴

'Big business' pastoralism may, then, remain a possible source for the funding of rural sanctuaries in the Central Apennines, and for the accumulation of private wealth amongst the local élites before the Social War, but it is important to be clear that evidence which is often used to suggest the large scale on which specialist pastoralism was practised in the Central Apennines is by no means conclusive, and is open to alternative interpretations. It has also been noted that 'big

³⁹ Ve. 147.

⁴⁰ e.g. for Hercules at Rome, see Bayet, *L'Hercule romain*, 127 ff.

⁴¹ Hellanicus *FGH* 4, F 111 = D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 35.

⁴² Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C.

⁴³ Barker, 'The Archaeology of the Italian Shepherd', 13; id., 'Animals, Ritual and Power in Ancient Samnium', in P. Meniel (ed.), *Animal et pratiques religieuses: les manifestations matérielles* (Paris, 1989).

⁴⁴ E. A. Sydenham, *The Roman Republican Coinage* (London, 1952), nos. 628, 641; cf. recumbent bulls on 627, 631, 638, 642.

business' is likely to have been privileged in our ancient literary sources for Italy in general, and that this factor may have given to modern scholars a misleading impression about the extent of pastoral specialization.⁴⁵ Furthermore, comparison with the Dogana system of the modern period must surely only be made with great caution: the creation of the Dogana system came in response to a demand for wool from the whole of Europe, a situation which does not compare closely with that of the Roman period.⁴⁶

Archaeological survey, on the other hand, has been very useful in revealing types and patterns of settlement which suggest that specialist pastoralism should not be exaggerated: the signs are rather that pastoralism was one integral aspect of a mixed, 'risk-spreading' system. For our area, the Biferno Valley Survey, carried out by a team led by Barker in the 1970s and 1980s, followed by the excavation in the early 1980s of the farmstead/villa at Matrice in the Upper Biferno Valley by Lloyd, Rathbone, and Upson, provided invaluable information. Both projects also challenged assumptions about the types of establishment and patterns of settlement typical in the area. In particular, the farmhouse at Matrice may be used as an illustration of the kind of sturdy structure which could be found even in the Upper Valley. Unfortunately, most of the visible remains are from the Imperial period, when the farmhouse was relatively elaborate. There are, however, traces of earlier phases. Traces of a simple stone structure were found below the floor level of the main room. This early structure seems to have been small (c.10 m. by c.4.5 m.), and to have had only a crude roof. At this level were found indications of the building's earliest phase of occupation: black glaze pottery from the third to second centuries BC, as well as three coins, including one silver one, from the same period. Interestingly, a considerably larger structure replaced the original building in the course of the second century BC. The outer walls of the structure now measured at least 18 m. by 18 m. Analysis of faunal and botanical remains can tell us something about what the establishment was producing: there are pig, sheep/goat, and cattle bones, as well as remains of wheat, and even some grape-pips. The faunal and botanical remains indicate that mixed farming was being practised here, while the coins and black-

⁴⁵ As emphasized by G. Barker, *JRS* 72 (1982), 193.

⁴⁶ Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies', 204.

glaze pottery are forcible reminders that economic isolation should not be over-emphasized.⁴⁷

In the Biferno Valley as a whole, the bulk of settlement was found to be concentrated on the hillsides, away from the wet river valley, but on the edge of better arable upland soil.⁴⁸ While farmsteads cluster quite tightly around Larinum in the lower valley, presumably helping to supply produce for the city, further up the valley, a more regular pattern emerges of dense, fairly frequent settlement, establishments commonly occurring about every hundred metres, and with rarely more than about a kilometre between them.⁴⁹ When it was possible to analyse animal bones and vegetal remains, a mixture of agricultural and pastoral activities was suggested. Amongst the animal bones, a good proportion of pig-bones were found, suggesting that animal husbandry in the area involved more than just the rearing of sheep and goats.⁵⁰ This is hardly surprising, as pigs are a relatively economical source of meat.⁵¹ Nearby, the remains of a different kind of activity were identified. Within the valley floors of the river, there were found to be concentrations of pottery without evidence of bricks or tiles, while halfway up the valley some sort of camp in a rock shelter was discovered.⁵² Recently, excavations around the Abbey at San Vincenzo have brought to light foundations of small huts and enclosures. These discoveries have been suggested to be the sites of shepherd-shelters. Not only are these structures significantly less solid affairs than the sturdy but crude Samnite farmhouse at Matrice, but also the sites of these structures, either at high altitude or on the damp valley-floor, would have been unsuitable for the cultivation of crops according to the methods favoured in antiquity.⁵³

Thus, the Biferno Valley Survey built up a picture of life in the Central Apennines which was rather different from one that would reflect exclusive pastoral activity. It is well worth pointing out that, while this is the case, it is very difficult to distinguish between *mainly* pastoral establishments and *mainly* agrarian establishments. While the

⁴⁷ Lloyd and Rathbone, 'A Classical Landscape in Molise'; Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 182-4; see, however, Morel *Romanisation* (1991), 187 ff., for caution regarding over-optimistic assessments of the Samnite economy.

⁴⁸ Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, 'A Classical Landscape', esp. 44-5.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 44.

⁵⁰ Barker, 'The Archaeology of the Italian Shepherd', 12-14; Barker, 'Archaeology of Samnite Settlement', 24; Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, 'A Classical Landscape', 44-7.

⁵¹ e.g. K. D. White, *Roman Farming* (London, 1970), 316-17; 320-1 for the importance of pig-rearing in ancient Italy as a whole.

⁵² Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, 'A Classical Landscape', 47-8.

⁵³ Barker, 'The Archaeology of the Italian Shepherd', 14-15.

results of bone and botanical analysis may be used to make generalizations about mixed-farming, we have to await an exposition of criteria which would allow us to judge the *relative* importance of animals and agricultural products.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the position and spacing of the majority of settlements in the Biferno Valley remains very suggestive: it does appear that establishments were placed to make the best use of land for mixed farming: for example, many classical settlements on the Boiano lake basin are found at the junction between the higher arable soils and the damper valley floor which could be used as pasture.⁵⁵ It is hard too to know exactly how to understand remains of shepherd-shelters: it is not clear how the various types of establishment in the valley were articulated, although it is certainly possible that such shelters were used by shepherds who came comparatively short distances to use them.⁵⁶ There are, then, no obvious signs of the 'anomalous communities' of which Frayn wrote:⁵⁷ as far as can be seen, sheep-keeping seems to have been an integral part of mixed farming settlements within the valley. As for evidence of 'big business', the Biferno Survey and the excavation at Matrice did, however, produce some results which are suggestive regarding its possible chronology in the Central Apennines. Lloyd, working from the situation at Matrice, would not exclude the possibility that comparatively large-scale pastoralism was beginning to take off here in the decades before the Social War, and to enrich local élites.⁵⁸ However, the Biferno Valley Survey revealed the disappearance of establishments, and signs of nucleation of establishments to be a phenomenon which is really developing in the course of the first to second centuries AD.⁵⁹ The beginnings of masserie-type establishments are tentatively suggested for the Late Republic. These suggestions are very interesting particularly when taken in conjunction with the apparent 'boom' in urban life and benefaction during the Late Republic and Early Empire.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ This difficulty is admitted by e.g. Cherry, 'Pastoralism', 18; Barker, 'The Archaeology of the Italian Shepherd', 4.

⁵⁵ Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, 'A Classical Landscape', 45.

⁵⁶ As suggested by e.g. Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, *ibid.* 48; Garnsey, 'Mountain Economies', 201; Barker, 'The Archaeology of the Italian Shepherd', 3.

⁵⁷ Frayn, *Sheep-Rearing*, 66 ff.

⁵⁸ Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 184.

⁵⁹ Barker, Lloyd, and Webley, 'A Classical Landscape', 48–9.

⁶⁰ J. R. Patterson, 'Crisis: What Crisis? Rural Change and Urban Development in Imperial Appennine Italy', *PBSR* 55 (1987), 115 ff.; *id.*, 'Settlement, City and Élite'; Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 191–2; cf. Ch 3. s. 3. below.

2. ANCIENT PREOCCUPATIONS

(a) *Environmental Determinism*

As we have seen, Livy's depiction of the Samnites in the late fourth century BC as *montani atque agrestes* can by no means obviously be taken as a reference to pastoral activity. This is surely rather an example of the ancient motif of 'environmental determinism', the belief that human character is a reflection of the environment. Other authors too display interest in the mountain environment of the peoples of the Central Apennines. Livy's *montani atque agrestes* are undeniably depicted in a negative fashion in this passage. 'Rough' environments are variously perceived in antiquity: a 'rough' environment may be linked with moral excellence: images of continuous struggle and hard work are very important in Roman moral ideology of the later Republic and early Empire.⁶¹ On the other hand, a 'rough' environment may produce a population which falls below the ideal of civilization without decadence. This ambivalent attitude towards 'rough' environments is comparable with Roman ambivalence regarding *rustici*.⁶² The Samnites' environment raises questions about their degree of civilisation: hence they are *montani atque agrestes*. As I have suggested above, however, Livy's portrayal of the Samnites at the time of the Samnite Wars is very complex: the Samnites are made to display various barbarian attributes, such as their taste for flashy armour and human sacrifice, and are not primitive and pre-civilized, in the manner of Tacitus' Germans, for example.⁶³ Their mountain environment depicted at 9. 13. 7 is part of a complex picture, but adds to the impression of danger.

Elsewhere, the mountainous environment of the Central Apennines lends to the local inhabitants a more positive character. So, then, Cato's morally excellent youth is set against the background of *saxis Sabinis* ('Sabine rocks').⁶⁴ As we have already seen, this rough landscape, productive of moral excellence, is in striking contrast

⁶¹ e.g. Sall. *BC* 3–4, for justification of history-writing rather than doing good deeds oneself: 'pulchrum est bene facere rei publicae. etiam bene dicere haud absurdum est' ('It is a fine thing to do good deeds for the state, and even to speak well of it is not inglorious').

⁶² For ambivalence concerning *rustici*, see e.g. R. MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations 50 BC to AD 284* (New Haven, 1974), 28 ff.; A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Elites and Trade in the Roman Town', in Rich and Wallace-Hadrill, *City and Country*, 241 ff.

⁶³ Cf. Ch. 2, s. 8 above.

⁶⁴ Cato *ORF*(4) no. 8, 128 = Festus p. 350 L.

with other images of Sabinum in second-century BC literature.⁶⁵ Significantly later, Horace's 'rusticorum mascula militum proles' ('masculine offspring of country soldiers') pursue their admirable, pre-corrupt life-style against a specifically mountainous backdrop, the geographical location of which is hinted at by 'Sabellis . . . ligonibus' ('with Sabellian hoes').⁶⁶ With regard to the Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini and Frentani, Strabo mentions their mountain environment: *τὴν ὄρεινὴν κατέχουσιν* ('they occupy the mountainous region').⁶⁷ It is, in fact, interesting that Strabo seems to regard the Central Apennines as a solid block of mountain, which begins beyond the Fucine lake; according to his account, beyond the fertile Campanian plain, there is a gradation into fruitful hills followed by the mountains of the 'Samnites and Osci'.⁶⁸ After his mention of the mountain environment of these tribes, there follows a passage concerning their excellence particularly in warfare.⁶⁹ Given Strabo's interest in environmental factors, and the connection which he makes elsewhere between natural environment and local morality, most explicit in his depiction of Campania and Capua,⁷⁰ it is tempting to suppose that the juxtaposition of mountain environment and moral excellence implies a causal connection in the case of the Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, and Frentani.

It is, however, important to note that, even within the ancient discourse of 'environmental determinism', the value of particular environments may change: the Samnites, portrayed before the Social War, are *montani atque agrestes*, while the 'Sabellian' landscape, when used as a moral resource for the Augustan Age, becomes the location of manly excellence. There is also, importantly, a good degree of choice when it comes to categorizing a landscape: this point is exemplified most clearly by the case of Sabinum, a geographically varied territory which cannot easily be envisaged as a unified block. In the case of Sabinum, it seems likely that historical factors, namely the incorporation of Sabinum into the Roman citizenship, are important in the assignment of Sabinum to the category of 'rough lands' from the second century BC.

⁶⁵ Cf. Ch. 2, s. 4 above.

⁶⁶ *Odes* 3. 6. 38.

⁶⁷ 5. 4. 2 = 241 C.

⁶⁸ 5. 4. 3 = 242 C.

⁶⁹ 5. 4. 2 = 241 C: *ἔστι δὲ τὰ θυνὴ ταῦτα μικρὰ μὲν, ἀνδρικότατα δὲ . . .* ('these peoples are small in numbers, but the bravest . . .').

⁷⁰ 5. 4. 3 = 242 C; 5. 4. 13 = 250-1 C.

(b) *Types and Patterns of Settlement*

Images of non-urban settlement abound in ancient depictions of society in the Central Apennines. We have seen above Livy's depiction of the Samnites living *vicatim* at the time of the Samnite Wars.⁷¹ For Strabo, the Central Apennines had very few nuclei which deserved the name of *polis*: the Sabines had very few cities, and even Cures, once a *πόλις ἐπίσημος* ('city of note'), was now a *κωμίον* ('small village').⁷² The territory of the Vestini, Marsi, Paelligni, Marrucini and Frentani is also characterized largely by non-urban settlement:

τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα κωμηδὸν ζῶσιν, ἔχουσι δὲ καὶ πόλεις . . .

For the most part they live in villages, but they also have cities . . .⁷³

Similarly, and rather more problematically, Bovianum, Aesernia, Panna, and Telesia are described as villages after the actions of Sulla, as opposed to the *poleis* they had been previously. Amongst the Samnites, Beneventum and Venusia are the only settlements that are excepted from the general impression of the devastation of post-Sullan Samnium.⁷⁴

(c) *Hardship*

While mountains might make an ideal background for frugality, uprightness, and moral excellence in general, as we have seen in section 1, by the late Republic, the actual poverty of peoples of the Central Apennines is a topos, frequently used in satirical contexts. Marsic or 'Sabellian' origins are at various points associated with proverbial poverty, demonstrated not least by the attribution of poverty to Marsic individuals with regard to whom it is obviously inappropriate. For example, in *De Domo sua*, Cicero emphasizes the Marsic origins of Scato, whose name, he claims, was put forward by Clodius as purchaser of Cicero's house on the Palatine in order that Clodius should not appear both as seller and as purchaser of the house. The supposed outrage of Scato's claim to have bought the noblest house on the Palatine is heightened by the assertion that Scato had *nullum tectum* amongst the Marsi where he was born.⁷⁵ *Egens*, an adjective attributed to Scato in *De Domo sua*, and its cognates, appear

⁷¹ 9. 13. 7. ⁷² 5. 3. 1 = 228 C. ⁷³ 5. 4. 2 = 241 C.

⁷⁴ 5. 4. 11 = 250 C. ⁷⁵ *De Domo sua* 116.

in association with Marsi in other Ciceronian contexts. Cicero, in the *De Divinatione*, glosses Ennius' contemptuous reference to augurs 'quibus egestas imperat' ('driven by their indigence') as, *inter alios*, Marsi: once again, the Roman association of Marsi with poverty is illustrated.⁷⁶ Likewise, in the *Philippics*, 'Marso nescio quo Octavio' ('some Marsic man called Octavian'), put at the head of a legion by Dolabella, on the latter's invasion of Asia, is characterized as 'scelerato latrone atque egenti' ('a wicked and indigent robber'), whose rampage is said to provide fodder for his begging habit.⁷⁷ This attribution of poverty to individuals who come originally from the Central Apennines is surely the negative version of the admirable frugality supposedly exhibited by such individuals. The complexity and ambivalence of Roman moral ideology is well illustrated by these examples, and acts as a warning against reading Roman ideology as normative only in one direction.

(d) Manpower

When ancient authors characterize positively peoples of the Central Apennines, they do so most frequently in terms of the bravery of these peoples and their association with warfare.⁷⁸ As we have seen in Chapter 1, in the case of the Samnites, there is also a pre-Roman context for exploitation and idealization of available manpower: in the late fourth century, the Tarentines were apparently characterizing their Samnite allies as playing Pitanates to the Tarentines' Spartans.⁷⁹ The association with warfare can have negative overtones, as in Livy's depiction of the Samnites as *belligerum genus* ('a belligerent people').⁸⁰ after all, manpower which could be used against Rome cannot unambivalently be regarded as positive. Similarly, Appian's attribution of the saying 'no victory without or against the Marsi'⁸¹ to a pre-Social War context highlights the mixed blessings to Rome of having the Marsi as allies rather than fellow-citizens. It is perhaps not surprising that, even after the Social War, it is Sabellian, rather than specifically Samnite, manpower which appears in ideal contexts.⁸²

⁷⁶ *De Divinatione* 1. 132 = Enn. *Tr. fr.* 134 b J. ⁷⁷ Cic. *Phil.* 11. 2.

⁷⁸ Virg. *Georg.* 2. 167 ff.; Hor. *Odes* 3. 6. 37 ff.; Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 241 C; Pliny *NH* 3. 106.

⁷⁹ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C. ⁸⁰ 7. 30. 12.

⁸¹ BC 1. 46. 203. ⁸² e.g. Virg. *Georg.* 2. 167 ff.; Hor. *Odes* 3. 6. 37 ff.

3. RECONSTRUCTING LOCAL SOCIETY

(a) *Patterns and Types of Settlement*

pagi dicti a fontibus, quod eadem aqua uterentur. aquae enim lingua Dorica παγαί appellantur.

The pagi are so-called after springs, because they shared the same water. For in the Doric language, waters are called 'pagai'.⁸³

Greek and Roman authors believed that there were very few cities in the Central Apennines. Recently, however, scholars have emphasized the existence of urban features even before the Social War: there is now generally believed to have been greater continuity between trends in the later second century BC and the municipalization of the area in the first century BC to the first century AD. One of the real problems associated with assessing the degree to which a particular area was urbanized at any particular time is that it is actually very difficult to know from archaeological remains alone what would have constituted a city and what would not have done so. Sufficient epigraphical evidence is not always available to reveal all of the features which together constituted a city in ancient thought: temples, an agora, gymnasia, places of assembly, colonnaded streets, nor is it easy in many cases to uncover and excavate an area large enough to find (or fail to find) all these features; in the latter case, there will frequently also be problems with identification.⁸⁴

There are further complications: for example, it is as well to remember the significance of the Latin term *urbanitas*, denoting a polished and sophisticated life-style: comfortable and stylish living is the mark of a city.⁸⁵ This attribute may be denied to anyone originating from anywhere but the city of Rome, and may at other times be exported to the countryside.⁸⁶ On the other hand, archaeologists often

⁸³ Festus p. 247 L.

⁸⁴ R. Martin, *L'Urbanisme dans la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1956), 13 ff., 253 ff. for the creation of a standard idea of the *polis* particularly in the Hellenistic age; for ancient ideas of what a *polis* should be, see e.g. Pausanias 10. 4. 1, 10. 32. 10; Thuc. 1. 10; Strabo 5. 2. 6; Vitruvius 5. 1 ff.; for the conflict between the ideal of the city as the model of settlement, and the actual dominance of non-urban models of settlement in the ancient world, see M. Frederiksen, 'Changes in the Pattern of Settlement', *HIM* (1976), 341 ff.

⁸⁵ E. S. Ramage, *Urbanitas: Ancient Sophistication and Refinement* (Oklahoma, 1973).

⁸⁶ For the exportation of *urbanitas* to the countryside, see N. Purcell, 'Town in Country and Country in Town', in E. MacDougall (ed.), *Ancient Roman Villa Gardens* (Dunbarton Oaks, 1987), 187 ff.; Wallace-Hadrill, 'Elites and Trade', 248-9.

have to make judgements about the status of a settlement based on partial information: the absolute size of a site, or the existence of features such as fortifications, public buildings, street systems, and types and contents of tombs.⁸⁷ It will not always be possible to check archaeological classification against either the locals' self-representation, or against the perception of the settlement as exemplified by Greek or Roman literary sources.

Nevertheless, evidence from some pre-Social War sites in the Central Apennines remains suggestive. Most important of all in this respect have been La Regina's studies of the sites of future *municipia*. The choice of which settlements would become *municipia* does not appear to have been arbitrary, nor should there be too much emphasis on the Roman imposition of urban structures on a non-urbanized population.⁸⁸ Future *municipia* can often be seen to have been moving in the direction of urbanization, in the sense of the concentration within a fortified area of buildings of diverse functions, and/or the concentration within a small area of a sizeable élite enjoying a refined life-style.⁸⁹ At Saepinum, for example, it appears that there were buildings of public and private function before the Social War, and some fine Hellenistic mosaic pavements in private dwellings are eloquent testimony to élite lifestyle here.⁹⁰ Even before the Social War, there is evidence of the public production of bricks,⁹¹ just as there is at Bovianum;⁹² presumably building was on a large enough scale to justify local 'industry'. Buildings of public and private function may also be seen in pre-Social War Marruvium amongst the Marsi.⁹³ At Corfinium, conglomerations of tombs dating from the late second to early first centuries BC contain precious materials and even strigils,⁹⁴ providing evidence of enjoyment of the kind of

⁸⁷ e.g. Whitehouse and Wilkins, 'Greeks and Natives', 116.

⁸⁸ The influence of Latin colonies on local society in the third to second centuries BC is, however, surely very important: e.g. M. Torelli, 'La romanizzazione dei territori italici: il contributo della documentaria archeologica', in *La cultura italica* (Pisa, 1978), 75 ff., 82.

⁸⁹ M. Matteini Chiari, *Saepinum* (1982), 15–19; Torelli, 'Per il Sannio', 84; Torelli, 'Le popolazioni dell'Italia antica', 155; Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 184; La Regina, 'I Sanniti: il sogno di un impero', in S. Gattei *et al.*, *Molise*, 25 ff., 41.

⁹¹ La Regina, 'Centri urbani', 199: a brick-stamp found in the forum area bears the name of a *m(eddiss) t(úviti)s*.

⁹² G. De Benedittis, *Bovianum e il suo territorio* (Salerno, 1977), 9.

⁹³ Letta, "'Oppida'", "vici", "pagi", 232.

⁹⁴ La Regina, 'Centri urbani', 459.

refined 'good life' which was associated particularly with cities in ancient thought.

More is known about pre-Roman private life-styles in ancient Samnium than in any other part of the Central Apennines, simply because the archaeological picture of Molise in antiquity is clearer than that of neighbouring regions. Particularly important archaeological evidence is available not only from Saepinum, but also from Monte Vairano near modern Campobasso, whose ancient identity is as yet unclear.⁹⁵ The surrounding circuit of walls, probably dating from the fourth century BC, measures nearly 3 km., and encloses an area of 49 hectares.⁹⁶ There are three gates, and traces of arterial roads suggest an urban plan.⁹⁷ A small pottery-kiln found by the 'Porta Vittoria', as well as a dump of pottery outside this gate, attest the local production of black-glaze pottery.⁹⁸ Finds of fragments of around 80 Rhodian amphorae suggest that the inhabitants were importing fine Rhodian wine in the mid-second to first centuries BC, while coins from Pharos, Apollonia, Epirus, Thasos, and Ebusus might suggest the kind of international connections available to the inhabitants.⁹⁹ The excavated House of 'LN', inhabited from the second to mid-first centuries BC, displayed on its roof an antefix depicting Hercules and the Nemean lion,¹⁰⁰ neatly illustrating the pretensions of its inhabitants.

The non-urban aspect of the Central Apennines should not, then, be overdone even for the period before the Social War. With regard to the real growth of urban settlement in the Central Apennines in the Late Republic and Early Empire, it is as well to emphasize the fact that Strabo refers to 'few' cities rather than to 'no' cities. It is, however, true that he places more emphasis on the 'downgrading' of cities than on those settlements which still deserve the name of *polis*. As we have seen, he states that Bovianum and Aesernia, as well as Panna and Telesia, are now villages in the place of the *poleis* they once were, apparently as a result of the actions of Sulla in the 80s. Beneventum and Venusia are explicitly stated to be exceptions to his general rule concerning the contemporary dearth of πόλεις amongst the Samnites.¹⁰¹ This notice

⁹⁵ For suggestions that Monte Vairano should be identified with Aquilonia, see La Regina, 'I Sanniti: il sogno di un impero', 25 ff.; Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 277–83; G. De Benedittis, *Sannio* (1980), 321–8, id., *Samnium* (1991), 127.

⁹⁶ De Benedittis, *Sannio* (1980), 321–6; (1988), 36–44.

⁹⁷ De Benedittis, *Sannio* (1980), 321.

⁹⁸ G. De Benedittis, *Monte Vairano: la casa di 'LN'; catalogo della mostra* (Campobasso, 1988), 42.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 15.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 58–9.

¹⁰¹ Strabo 5. 4. 11 = 250 C.

is problematic. While what is known about these sites in the Samnite and early Roman periods is limited, there are some indications that Strabo's statement cannot be taken as a straight description of Samnium from the time when he was writing. At Aesernia, for example, there are some particularly rich funerary reliefs from the Caesarian and Julio-Claudian eras. The ambitious subjects depicted include gladiatorial contests, and the conflict between Alexander and Darius, suggesting the presence of a thriving local élite.¹⁰² Certainly, Cicero in the *Pro Cluentio*, delivered in the 50s BC, could still find it appropriate to single out Bovianum as a worthy supporter of his client,¹⁰³ a reference which might seem inappropriate if it was universally considered to be a 'village' at the time of the speech.

Apart from those sites which are explicitly denied the name of city by Strabo, more is known about Saepinum in the Augustan Age, a site which is implicitly excluded from Strabo's list. The Augustan Age seems to have been a very active time in the rebuilding of Saepinum, and the town apparently received a complete overhaul, walls, towers, and gates constructed, with financial help from the future emperor Tiberius himself.¹⁰⁴ An inscription from the basilica on the west side of the forum, constructed by the last decade of the first century BC, under L. Naevius Pansa, also attests the intervention of the imperial family in the form of Tiberius.¹⁰⁵ A particularly active local individual in this period was C. Ennius Marsus, who not only built an impressive mausoleum for himself, but also a whole series of fountains, including the elegant Griffin Fountain, a joint benefaction with L. Ennius Gallus.¹⁰⁶ The signs are, then, that Saepinum was taking on an unmistakably urban aspect precisely when Strabo was writing.

It seems possible that concentration on the destruction of Samnite civilization was important in post-Sullan Roman ideology, and that hence notices of the decline of Samnite cities may appear to be rather exaggerated when matched with the archaeological record. This trend would certainly be in keeping with Sulla's justification of his activity in Samnium in terms of the peril posed to Rome if the Samnites held

¹⁰² Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 188. ¹⁰³ 197.

¹⁰⁴ *CIL* ix. 2443; Matteini Chiari, *Saepinum* (1982), 57–8 for discussion of chronology.

¹⁰⁵ For inscription, see M. Gaggiotti, 'Le iscrizioni della basilica di Saepinum e i rectores della provincia del Samnium', *Athen.* 56 (1978), 146 ff., 147 ff.; cf. Gaggiotti, *Saepinum* (1982), 29.

¹⁰⁶ Gaggiotti *Saepinum* (1982), 29; Matteini Chiari, *Saepinum* (1982), 70.

together as a separate people.¹⁰⁷ It is surely relevant that Strabo includes in his list of settlements that are now no more than *κῶμαι* centres that must have been of great ideological importance to the Samnites: Bovianum, capital of the Pentri, and Aesernia, the eventual capital of the insurgent allies.

Despite the need to emphasize moves towards urbanization even before the Social War, it is nevertheless important to retain a sense of perspective. In the second century BC, developments in the Central Apennines do not compare well with those in Tyrrhenian Italy. For example, despite the emergence of *villae rusticae* in Sabinum, urbanization is late and on a small scale. Trebula Mutuesca, an important local centre, only became a *municipium* in the Augustan Age, as did Amiternum, which had remained a *praefectura* up to this date.¹⁰⁸ The Roman town of Reate is strikingly small, the inhabited area covering only 8 hectares.¹⁰⁹ The settled area of Cures too seems to have become noticeably reduced in the course of the second century BC.¹¹⁰ While houses with polychrome mosaic at Saepinum may be dated to the late second century BC, and are the first real evidence for what may really be considered as recognizable elite private housing, it is as well to remember that, at Pompeii, houses with peristyles first appear in the early second century: there is a considerable time-lag involved here.¹¹¹ The systematization of the city of Rome particularly in the 180s and 170s may be seen in the context of an urban 'boom' in Tyrrhenian Italy in the early second century BC, which is not echoed by truly comparable phenomena in the Central Apennines.¹¹² There is a similar gap between the periphery of the Central Apennines and the inner areas. Here, Torelli's conception of cultural 'bands' in Italy seems helpful in emphasizing the distinctive character of Pentrian territory. Beneventum and Larinum, for example, are very much more precociously urbanized, and outside cultural influences seem to be absorbed much earlier and more profoundly.¹¹³ Larinum, for example, probably possessed a regular urban plan already in the third century BC:¹¹⁴ the

¹⁰⁷ Strabo 5. 4. 11 = 249 C.

¹⁰⁸ For the status of Trebula Mutuesca, see *CIL* ix. 463; cf. F. Coarelli, *Lazio (Guide archeologiche Laterza, Bari, 1982)*, 19; for the status of Amiternum, see *CIL* ix. 397; cf. Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 19.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 34; M. P. Muzzioli, *Forma Italiae, Regio IV, ii: Cures Sabini* (Florence, 1980), 40.

¹¹¹ Gros, *Architecture*, 25 ff.

¹¹² Ibid. 17–18.

¹¹³ Torelli, 'La romanizzazione dei territori italici', 81; id., 'Per il Sannio', 29, 34.

¹¹⁴ La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 18; cf. Torelli, 'Per il Sannio', 28.

life-style of the local élite conveyed by Cicero in the 50s in the *Pro Cluentio* may be imagined to have deep roots.

While it seems important to establish a sense of perspective by comparing the state of urban development in the Central Apennines in the second century bc with that of Tyrrhenian Italy during the same period, it is equally important not to regard the social organization of the Central Apennines as merely some kind of pale and inferior imitation of the urban condition of Tyrrhenian Italy. Documentary and archaeological evidence taken together reveal the sophistication of social organization in the Central Apennines before the Social War. In Latin-speaking areas such as the Vestine territory, the system is conventionally referred to as 'pagano-vicanic', although it must be said that details of relationships between *vici* and *pagi* remain obscure.¹¹⁵ On the traditional view, each *pagus* was conceived of as a territorial and administrative unit, within which there might be one or more *vici*. While the explanation of *pagus* which appears in the passage of Festus quoted above is surely an example of false etymology, the territorial aspect of the *pagus* is nevertheless brought out. *Vici* and *pagi* alike were administered by magistrates. Particularly characteristic of the 'pagano-vicanic' system was a scattering of private and public functions within the *pagus*.¹¹⁶

In Oscan-speaking areas of the Central Apennines, the administrative terminology is rather more difficult to establish,¹¹⁷ although the basic conception of territory is apparently similar to that within the pagano-vicanic system. The basic conceptual unit was the *touta*, its annual supreme, non-collegiate magistrate being the *meddix touticus*. In earliest times the *touta* was apparently equivalent to the tribal *nomen*, as in the third-century bc reference to *tota marouca* (i.e. the Marrucini), within which Teate could be contained, or the fifth-century references in the Penna Sant'Andrea texts to *safinas tutas*

¹¹⁵ On the Vestine area, see the classic article of La Regina, 'Insediamenti vestini'.

¹¹⁶ D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 4. 15 ff. for an account of Servius Tullius' creation of *pagi* which is revealing as to the nature of *pagi* in historical times; cf. Frederiksen, 'Changes in the Pattern of Settlement'; H. Galsterer, 'Urbanisation und Municipalisation Italiens in 2 und 1 Jh. v. Chr.', in *HIM* (1976), 327; Torelli, 'La romanizzazione dei territori italici', 83.

¹¹⁷ For caution regarding the application of Latin terminology to non-Latin areas, see V. Laffi, 'Problemi dell'organizzazione paganico-vicano nelle aree Abruzzesi e Molisane', *Athen.* 52 (1974), 336 ff.

(the *Safineis).¹¹⁸ It is clear that, in Oscan-speaking Campania at least, *touta* could also be used to refer to urban, rather than tribal, entities: thus, for example, an inscription from Capua refers to *medikk. túvtik kapu*.¹¹⁹ The reference to the urban *nomen* as *touta* is apparently a secondary development.¹²⁰ There are some problems in establishing exactly what was the meaning of *touta* in the century before the Social War in the less urbanized areas of the Central Apennines, such as the territory of the Pentri. The problem is that there is no definite case where *touta* is qualified by a name. When *meddices toutikoi* appear on brick- and tile-stamps from Bovianum, or on building-inscriptions at Pietrabbondante,¹²¹ it is, then, not immediately clear whether the *touta* referred to is *safinim*, the *nomen* attested in the mid-second century text from Pietrabbondante, or a smaller unit, urban or proto-urban, as in the Capuan example mentioned above. Circumstantial evidence makes the former case more likely, however, in that *meddices toutikoi* were very active at Pietrabbondante, a sanctuary which was apparently relevant to all the people of *safin*.¹²² Even if this is the case, it is still clear that there were smaller conceptual units within the larger idea of the *touta safina*, perhaps corresponding to the Latin concept of the *pagus*. The diversity of suffixes relating to individual place-names in central Italy, such as ΣΑΙΙΙΝΑΕ/σαιινες, might suggest the linking together of different types of settlement, such as a fortified area and a centre further down in the plain.¹²³

Performing a central role in local communities of the Central Apennines were the rural sanctuaries. This central role may be exemplified by epigraphical reference to the *pagus* as a whole, or even to a number of *pagi*,¹²⁴ or to an entire *nomen* as in the case of Temple A at Pietrabbondante, by the frequent association of local magistrates with the various stages of their construction, by the co-

¹¹⁸ For *tota marouca*, see Ve. 218. For *tutas safinas*, see Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 325 ff.; La Regina, 'Appunti su entità etniche e strutture istituzionali nel Sannio antico', in *AION(Arch.)* 3 (1981), 129 ff., esp. 130-1. In philology an asterisk is used to denote an unproven form: in the case of *safineis, the nominative form is not attested, but may reasonably be reconstructed.

¹¹⁹ Ve. 88.
¹²⁰ La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 130-1, for the priority of the broader concept, as demonstrated by the Penna Sant'Andrea texts.

¹²¹ La Regina, 'I Sanniti: il sogno di un impero', 41-2.

¹²² P. Poccetti, 'L'epigrafia come fonte per la ricerca etnotoponomistica nell'Italia antica', *AION(Ling.)* 4 (1984), 53 ff., 55 ff.

¹²³ e.g. for Furfo, see *CIL* (2nd edn.) 1804.

existence of functions at some sanctuaries, and, not least, by the disproportionate amount of attention lavished on their appearance, particularly in the course of the second century BC.

Architecturally, the best known of second century BC sanctuaries are those in the territory of the Pentri. A combination of the work of Adriano La Regina and other Soprintendenti of the region, and interest in creating a separate identity for Molise, means that this area is very much better known archaeologically than any other in the Central Apennines. If we had a fuller archaeological picture of the Central Apennines outside Samnium, it would be much easier to assess the degree to which Samnium had a special character. Nevertheless, there are some signs of emphasis on rural sanctuaries outside Samnium, such as the sanctuary of Lucus Angitiae amongst the Marsi, rebuilt or enlarged between the second and first centuries BC.¹²⁵

Amongst the Pentri, there is a real concentration on building and renovation in the second century BC, and particularly in the decades immediately preceding the Social War. Beginning with some relatively modest sanctuaries in the area, at San Giovanni in Galdo, coins deposited under the pavement of the sanctuary indicate some building activity post-104 BC, perhaps indicating activity in the decade before the Social War.¹²⁶ At the sanctuary at Campochiaro, a series of mid-second century bronzes may be related to ceremonies relating to the foundation or reconstruction of the temple, while fragments of a Doric frieze from the second half of the second century BC also point to refurbishing at this stage.¹²⁷ Building at Vastogirardi may also be dated to this period by pottery fragments.¹²⁸

Of all the Samnite sanctuaries, however, the most famous and impressive is the theatre-temple complex B at Pietrabbondante, the last of three built in the vicinity in the course of the third to second

¹²⁵ e.g. at Lucus Angitiae amongst the Marsi, the sanctuary was rebuilt or enlarged between the 2nd and 1st cents. BC: M. Torelli, 'Italia: Regio IV (Samnium)', *Atti del colloquio internazionale AIEGL su epigrafia e ordine senatorio, Roma, 14-20 maggio 1981*, ii. (Rome, 1982), 165 ff., 168.

¹²⁶ La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 237-41; Di Niro, *Sannio* (1980), 269 ff.

¹²⁷ S. Capini, *Sannio* (1980), 197 ff.; in general, ead., *Samnium* (1991), 115 ff.

¹²⁸ J. -P. Morel, 'Le Sanctuaire de Vastogirardi et les influences hellénistiques en Italie centrale', *HIM* (1976), 255 ff. NB the temples at Schiavi d'Abruzzo do not fit into the pattern of renovation and rebuilding in the later second century BC. In fact, here the earlier temple (3rd or early 2nd cent. BC) is considerably larger and more impressive than the later one (late 2nd to early 1st century BC). This decline may be explained by the increasing importance of the nearby sanctuary at Pietrabbondante. For discussion of the temples, see La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 237-241.

centuries bc. In his discussion of this site (the building of which is dated to the period between the last quarter of the second century and the beginning of the Social War), La Regina points to the direct influence of Campanian adaptations of Hellenistic models for both the theatre and the temple. The overall effect is very impressive, and direct influence from the Eastern Mediterranean is a real possibility.¹²⁹ Greek influence is apparent also at an earlier stage, in the stone-carving of Temple A, built in the first half of the second century.¹³⁰ The rural sanctuaries provided local élites with ample opportunities to advertise their presence in association with impressive monumental architecture in a manner which certainly finds no immediate echo in the civil architecture of urban and proto-urban centres of the Central Apennines before the Social War.¹³¹

A considerable amount may be known about the functions of the sanctuaries at Pietrabbondante. Their apparent isolation should probably not be overemphasized, as it may have more to do with the current state of excavation than with third- to early first-century conditions.¹³² Certainly, the necropolis at Troccola 1 kilometre to the south west of the sanctuaries, with contents dated to the fifth to third centuries bc suggests that the area was inhabited in the earlier period at least.¹³³ Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the third-century 'Ionic' sanctuary, the early second-century sanctuary, and, finally, the theatre-temple complex functioned as centres for an area much larger than the immediate environment. At the earliest levels of the site, the great majority of objects found are arms, which appear to have been the weapons of foreign peoples, and may be interpreted as *spolia hostium* of the Samnites.¹³⁴ If this is so, they would constitute

¹²⁹ La Regina, 'Il Sannio' 229; cf. M. H. Crawford, 'Italy and Rome', *JRS* 71 (1981), 153 ff., 159 for the choice of precise Hellenistic models for the theatre-temple complex at Pietrabbondante.

¹³⁰ La Regina, 'Il Sannio' 229.
¹³¹ Ibid. 229 for contrast between the situation in proto-urban Alfedena, where early 3rd-cent. buildings are not improved during the course of the later 3rd and 2nd centuries, and attention paid towards improvement of rural sanctuaries in the territory of the Pentri, particularly in the later 3rd to 2nd cents. bc. cf. La Regina, 'Centri urbani'; Gros, *Architecture*, 28–9; Torelli, 'La romanizzazione dei territori italici', 83 ff.; Patterson, 'Crisis: What Crisis?', 142–6; id., 'Settlement, City and Élite', 149–52.

¹³² For a cautious approach regarding the apparent isolation of Samnite sanctuaries, see Morel, 'Le Sanctuaire de Vastogirard', 261.

¹³³ Suano, *Sannio* (1980), 132 ff.; for suggestions of signs that the necropolis continued to be used during the period contemporary with the sanctuaries, see Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 231; cf. La Regina *Sannio* (1980), 131; Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 230 for signs of settlement at nearby Arco and Colle Vernone.

¹³⁴ La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 22–5.

the earliest evidence for the use of the sanctuary as a symbolic 'central place' for the Samnites.¹³⁵ The earliest weapons are dated to the late fifth or first half of the fourth centuries BC, and some are securely of Tarentine production.¹³⁶ It is hard to be precise about the historical context of these arms, but they form a suggestive backdrop to the later friendly relations between Tarentum and the Samnites. Other fragments can be dated to the period of the Samnite Wars, perhaps the result of Samnite successes against Rome and her allies.¹³⁷

Moving forward in time, as we have seen, an inscription associated with Temple A, proclaiming the refurbishment of an entrance-way at least (the text is fragmentary), makes reference to *safinim*, a term which must, in the second century BC, refer to the Pentri as a whole.¹³⁸ The presence of the ethnic, as well as the rich Oscan documentary record associated with Pietrabbondante in particular, provides us with a useful reminder of how to look at 'Greek culture' of Italy. Local communities played a very active role in selecting and using models and motifs to reinforce their individual cultural identities.¹³⁹ The theatre, perfectly aligned to Temple B, was built according to the model of *comitia*: it seems very possible that it was used not just for performances, but also for council-meetings.¹⁴⁰ A private dedication to *Vikturraí* from the late second century BC might emphasize further the role of Pietrabbondante as a focus of specifically Samnite identity: some would interpret it as a dedication to an anti-Roman victory.¹⁴¹

The distinctive role of the rural sanctuaries in the Central Apennines before the Social War may also be illustrated by reference to changes after the Social War. A perceptible decline may be noted in attention paid towards the rural sanctuaries, striking in comparison with the building programmes of the second century BC: it is important to note that, despite the fact that the rural sanctuaries function before the Social War as 'central places', urban development proper tends to occur elsewhere. Attention was focused in the Augustan Age rather on

¹³⁵ La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 22.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 23; La Regina, *Sannio* (1980), 139–53.

¹³⁷ La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 24–5.

¹³⁸ Ve. 149.

¹³⁹ Whitehouse and Wilkins, 'Greeks and Natives', for acute criticism of the usual concepts of 'Hellenization' in modern scholarship: e.g. 102, 'Equally invidious is the strongly pro-Greek prejudice of most scholars, which leads them to regard all things Greek as inherently superior. It follows that Greekness is seen as something that other societies will acquire through simple exposure—like measles (but nicer!).'

¹⁴⁰ La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 21.

¹⁴¹ Po. 16, with note.

the new *municipia*, founded often on lowland settlement sites, where local élites began to concentrate on building fine private houses and public benefactions.¹⁴² A notable exception to the general decline in attention paid towards the rural sanctuaries is the Hercules Curinus sanctuary above Sulmona, refurbished magnificently in the mid-first century BC. It is surely no accident that this sanctuary is an exception to the general rule in the Central Apennines: its close proximity to the new *municipium* at Sulmona surely meant that its importance could continue, and develop, without any clash of interests between *municipium* and rural sanctuary.¹⁴³ Overall, then, a significant change in élite mentality is evident, and in the last century BC and first century AD, developments in the Central Apennines become, temporarily, very much more closely comparable with those in Tyrrhenian Italy.

The urban 'boom' of the early Empire was apparently a short-lived phenomenon in the Central Apennines. The 'pagano-vicanic' model for the articulation of territory was remarkably persistent in this area.¹⁴⁴ It is likely that small clusters of settlement, individually administered within the larger administrative entity of the *pagus*, was an attractive means of farming efficiently the fractured landscape of the Central Apennines.

(b) Social Structure

Can the images of austerity and hardship on the one hand, and military prowess on the other, which are used in ancient literary texts to characterize peoples of the Central Apennines, be related to distinctive features of local society? In the case of the Sabines, I would suggest that the choice of how to categorize them was largely determined by the historical context of their conquest by Rome and incorporation into the citizenship by the mid-third century BC. It is remarkably difficult to make generalizations about Sabinum, whether in terms of its geography or culture, not least because the idea of Sabinum as an entity may well have been a comparatively late,

¹⁴² La Regina, 'I territori sabellici e sannitici', 456; Patterson, 'Crisis: What Crisis?', 142–46; Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 185–8; Patterson, 'Settlement, City and Elite', 155–6; NB it is important on the other hand not to overemphasize the neglect of the rural sanctuaries after the Social War. e.g. La Regina, 'Il Sannio', 237 for renovation of the later sanctuary at Schiavi d'Abruzzo after the Social War.

¹⁴³ La Regina, 'I territori sabellici e sannitici', 444 ff.

¹⁴⁴ La Regina, 'Insediamenti vestini', 'I territori sabellici e sannitici', 441 ff.; Frederiksen, 'Changes in the Pattern of Settlement', 350.

Roman invention, but also because comparatively very little is known about the archaeology of Sabinum after the Roman conquest. The subordinate position of the Sabines to Rome after their conquest might, however, be emphasized by selected features which could be observed, such as the apparent comparative lack of urbanization in the area.¹⁴⁵

Images of the austerity and military prowess of other peoples of the Central Apennines might also be explained partly in terms of the history of their relationship with Rome. Emphasis on the usefulness of the Marsi and other peoples of the Central Apennines in terms of manpower, demonstrated in part by the powerfulness of their opposition to Rome in the Social War, might well have been used by the peoples themselves to strengthen claims of deserving the citizenship, while assertions of environmentally determined worthiness might have been perceived to be valuable when competing for office.¹⁴⁶

The history of the relationship of peoples of the Central Apennines with Rome might, then, partly explain their special place in Roman ideology of the later Republic and early Empire, in contrast with the negative place occupied by the Etruscans. With regard to the Etruscans, however, the Greek and Roman topos of Etruscan decadence may be seen to be a phenomenon more profound than an arbitrary assignment of Etruscans to a moral category within classical thought. The theme of Etruscan decadence plays on the observation of a highly differentiated society, in which the élite were clearly marked off from the rest of the population, a social situation which was at least partially preserved right up to the time of the Social War.¹⁴⁷ Unfortunately, Greek and Roman authors offer us no comparable detailed depictions of society in the Central Apennines, but one may still ask whether images of austerity and military prowess correspond to any concrete differences within the structures of the local societies.

Manpower figures for Italian tribes given by Polybius in relation to

¹⁴⁵ See esp. Coarelli, *Lazio*, 10 ff.; Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 17 ff.; C. Pietrangeli, 'La Sabina nell'antichità', in *Rieti e il suo territorio*, 9 ff.; S. Segenni, *Amaturnum e il suo territorio in età romana* (Pisa, 1985).

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Wiseman, *New Men*, 107 ff., for the 'ideology of novitas'.

¹⁴⁷ e.g. Livy on the *principes* of Etruria e.g. 2. 44. 8, 9. 36. 5, 10. 13. 3, 10. 16. 3; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 9. 5. 4 for *δυνατότατοι* and *πενέστατοι*. W. V. Harris, *Rome in Etruria and Umbria* (Oxford, 1971), 114 ff., for arguments concerning the persistence of local social structures after the Roman conquest. For discussion of *lautni* in particular, see Harris, *ibid.*, 124–9; Crawford, *Romanisation* (1991), 135 ff., for crucial discussion of links between the spread of Roman silver coinage and manpower for the Roman army.

the war against the Gauls in 225 bc are suggestive,¹⁴⁸ although it would be unwise to underestimate the problems related to interpreting them. Most interestingly, the figures for the Etruscans are very low, while, in contrast, the figures for the Samnites are very high indeed. The figure Polybius gives for the numbers put into the field by the 'Etruscans and Sabines' is 4,000 cavalry, plus infantry in excess of 50,000. For the 'Samnites', the figure for the list of men able to bear arms is 7,000 cavalry and 70,000 infantry. There is clearly some confusion here: it is most unlikely that the Sabines would, in 225 bc, have been counted separately from the Romans.¹⁴⁹ However, even if the figure cited refers to Etruscans alone, the density of free persons to square kilometres of land in Etruscan territory remains very low: 14.4 per sq. km.¹⁵⁰ Polybius' 'Samnites' must include Campanians, meaning that it is hard to arrive at a fixed calculation for the population density of Samnium. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible to arrive at a reasonable hypothetical figure, as does La Regina. Starting from an overall density of 37.8 free persons per sq. km. in Campania and Samnium, he suggests erring well (and surely excessively) on the high side for Campanian 'Samnites', putting forward a figure of 50 free persons per sq. km. for this area, compared with 40.6 for the Latins. Nevertheless, the figure for Samnium remains comparatively very high, at 34.8 free persons per sq. km.,¹⁵¹ particularly considering the high proportion of land over 1,000 m in the territory. These figures would seem to suggest that the land was being farmed very effectively, and would also suggest that the way in which the land was used did not put small farmers to a disadvantage.

The figures for the northern Abruzzi peoples (the Marsi, Vestini, Paeligni, Marrucini, and Frentani)¹⁵² are less strikingly high, averaging out at 23.2 free persons per sq. km. on calculations from figures 'corrected' from Polybius¹⁵³ (or 21.6 on La Regina's calculation from

¹⁴⁸ Polyb. 2. 24. 4-16, with Walbank, *Polybius* (vol. i, 1957) *ad loc.*

¹⁴⁹ Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 48-9. ¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 54.

¹⁵¹ La Regina, 'Centri urbani', 449-55.

¹⁵² Polybius does not mention the Paelignians. For the suggestion that they are probably nevertheless included, see K. J. Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt* (Leipzig, 1886), 365.

¹⁵³ For the suggestion that Polybius' figure for the infantry of the northern Abruzzi peoples should be amended to 40,000, to give a more normal ratio of 1 : 10 between cavalry and infantry, see Beloch, *ibid.* 360; Beloch, *Der römische Bund* (Leipzig, 1880), 97-8. For the suggestion that the number should be amended to 30,000, on the grounds that this figure produces the most plausible density of population, see Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 49.

'uncorrected' figures).¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, this figure is still relatively high, when compared with that for the Etruscans, Umbrians (15.3), Lucanians (16.1), and Apulians (16.6),¹⁵⁵ and evidence from the first century BC suggests that the northern Abruzzo peoples could provide abundant numbers of manpower.¹⁵⁶

What conclusions can be drawn from these figures? The exceptionally low figure for the Etruscans has reasonably been seen partly as a reflection of the indigenous social situation. It is likely that serfs, who were probably not normally eligible for service in the army, formed a fair proportion of the Etruscan population, and continued to do so, particularly in the north, even up until the Social War.¹⁵⁷ Is it possible also to see the relatively high figures for the northern Abruzzi peoples, and the strikingly high figures for the Samnites as a reflection of specific local social circumstances? It is not entirely clear whether the figures given by Polybius include *proletarii*, but, as Brunt argues, it seems very unlikely that these were included within the totals.¹⁵⁸ It seems, then, likely that the high figure for the Samnites represents a thriving peasantry rather than large numbers of rural poor. While archaeology cannot ultimately tell us about ownership of property, the pattern of settlement in the Biferno Valley area for the second to first centuries BC certainly does not tell against this hypothesis. For this period, the pattern of settlement is dense, with the majority of structures apparently placed so as to make best use of agricultural land, not, of course, excluding the possibility of exploiting higher land and the valley floors for pastoralism. As we have seen, the pattern for the first to second centuries AD seems very different, with far more conglomeration of settlement.

Wiseman's evidence for the origins of Roman senators in the first century BC and the Augustan Age is also suggestive in this context.¹⁵⁹ Although there are problems in the use of prosopographical evidence (not least relating to how to count senators whose origins remain only probable or possible), his findings might be used to gain a broad idea of the relative success of senators from various regions of Italy. Counting together senators of certain, probable, and possible origins,

¹⁵⁴ For the proposal that Polybius' numbers should be retained, see La Regina, 'Centri urbani', 447.

¹⁵⁵ Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 54.

¹⁵⁶ Domitius Ahenobarbus was able to raise 20 cohorts among the Marsi and Paeligni: Caesar *BC* 1. 15. 7; Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 87.

¹⁵⁷ Brunt, *Italian Manpower*, 44–58.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 58–9.

¹⁵⁹ Wiseman, *New Men*, Appendix 2.

the Etruscans and Umbrians come out at the top of the list of allies enfranchised after 90 BC, yielding nineteen (five certain, eleven probable, three possible) and eighteen (three certain, six probable, nine possible) senators respectively for the first century BC and the Augustan Age. Peoples of the Central Apennines come out comparatively badly, with a figure of nine (one certain, four probable, and four possibles) for the Marsi, four (two certain, one probable, and one possible) for the Samnites, two for the Vestini (one of whom is probable, another only possible), seven for the Paeligni (three certain, four probable, none before the Augustan era), and six for the Marrucini (two certain, four possible). On the available evidence, therefore, there seems to be a considerable difference between the senatorial success of the Etruscans and Umbrians on the one hand, and that of the peoples of the Central Apennines on the other. Once again, amongst peoples of the Central Apennines, there are differences: the Marsi are apparently perceptibly more successful than other peoples of the area in the time period treated by Wiseman.

These figures are clearly open to a variety of interpretations. Some scholars emphasize variations within the group of peoples of the Central Apennines. Wiseman, for example, surely rightly sees senatorial success as likely to depend on a variety of factors. While, in his view, the comparative lack of urbanization in the Central Apennines is likely to have affected success in the Roman senate, he suggests that the comparative success of the Marsi within this group might be explained in terms of proximity to Rome, particularly by means of Roman roads, encouraging both the passage of local members of the élite to Rome, and the passage of Roman senators through the area, stopping off on the way to other parts of Italy.¹⁶⁰ This reconstruction is supported by evidence of ties of *hospitium* between the Marsic élite and Roman senators.¹⁶¹ Broad differences between the Etruscans and Umbrians on the one hand and peoples of the Central Apennines on the other remain, however.

The most immediate explanation for the gap between the comparative senatorial success enjoyed by the Etruscans and Umbrians and the

¹⁶⁰ Wiseman, *New Men*, 24–32.

¹⁶¹ A *tessera hospitalis* in the form of a ram's head found at Trasacco, in the territory of the Marsi, records relations of hospitality between a Roman *T. Manlius T.f.*, and a Marsic individual *T. Staiodius N.f.*: *CIL* i/2. 1764; cf. Letta, *I Marsi*, 100. For the famous friendship between Poppaedius Silo and Drusus and Marius, see Plut. *Cat. Min.* 2; Diod. 37. 15. 3; Val. Max. 3. 1. 2; Auct. *De Vir. Ill.* 80. 11.

comparative lack of success enjoyed by peoples of the Central Apennines is surely that, for some reason, or reasons, the local élites of the Central Apennines were not as readily perceived to conform to the model of what Roman senators were expected to be. I will explore this possibility in more detail below, suggesting that there may in fact be a link between high numbers of men available for the army and comparative lack of senatorial success, and that second- to early first-century BC Samnite society in particular was, for the ancient world, comparatively equal.

The majority of modern scholars have, on the contrary, considered Central Apennine society to have been highly differentiated. For Salmon, for example, Samnite society was very divided: wealth, power, and broad cultural horizons were enjoyed by very few, while the 'average' Samnite endured a 'life of toil and hardship, no doubt as the retainer of a local dynast'. In Salmon's view, Roman images of 'Sabellian' hardship represent the exceptionally restricted life-style of these 'average' Samnites.¹⁶² Letta regarded the Marsi before the Social War as being dominated by a restricted number of aristocratic families: in his view, this is suggested by the recurrence of notices of Vettii, Poppaedii, and Scatonnes.¹⁶³ Gaggiotti has seen the second to first centuries BC as a time of dramatic change in the growth of capital and distribution of resources in Samnium: he sees the second century BC as a time when land was concentrated within a few families, in contrast with the fourth to third centuries, when wealth was more evenly distributed within the community.¹⁶⁴ For the second to first centuries, then, his view of Samnite society is very similar to that of Salmon. Torelli also has interpreted ancient evidence to support his suggestion of a considerable degree of social stratification in Samnium, although he does admit that the situation here is not on the same scale as that in parts of Etruria. His picture of local society is, however, one of greater continuity than that of Gaggiotti: in his

¹⁶² Salmon, *Samnium*, 53; cf. 52, 'But there are also indications that Samnium, like other parts of Italy, contained large landed estates owned by a handful of dynastic families who enjoyed wealth, power, and authority and for centuries were the leaders of the nation and the makers of its policy. There must have been servile and feudal aspects to a society which did not live under a city system of government but was organized in rural communities. The lower orders must have been economically dependent on the aristocrats.'

¹⁶³ Letta, *I Marsi*, 99-100.

¹⁶⁴ M. Gaggiotti, 'Tre casi regionali italiani: il Sannio pentro', in *Bourgeoisies* (1983), 137 ff., 137-8.

opinion, a high degree of social stratification can be observed from the archaic period through into the first century BC.¹⁶⁵

It is worth reconsidering the evidence used by Salmon, Letta, Gaggiotti, and Torelli to reconstruct a highly stratified situation. Most of the evidence used by Torelli comes from a comparatively early period. He attempts to see the Sacred Spring myths in 'class' terms, as a means by which a hereditary aristocracy could maintain its position.¹⁶⁶ Certainly there are examples of this phenomenon in accounts of Greek colonization, but it must be said that the Sacred Spring myths do not invite this interpretation: it is, in fact, striking that mention of individuals in the Sacred Spring myths seems to be a rare and secondary development.¹⁶⁷ This general absence of individuals is one feature which in fact distinguishes this collection of myths from accounts of Greek colonization, in which named oikists are a recurrent feature. Likewise, he sees in 'class' terms the 'Samnite' gladiators who appear in ancient literary sources: according to his interpretation, these individuals were slaves sold abroad by their masters.¹⁶⁸ Once again, there is nothing in the ancient evidence to fix this particular interpretation: we do not even know whether 'Samnite' gladiators were always, or usually, ethnically Samnite.¹⁶⁹ Livy suggests that it was the Campanians who, 'ab superbia et odio' ('through arrogance and hatred') started equipping gladiators in Samnite armour and calling them 'Samnites', perhaps implying that they were not always ethnically Samnite. It is surely more likely that, whoever these 'Samnite' gladiators were, they were being associated with the military reputation of the Samnites, much employed as mercenaries, rather than that they were always ethnically Samnites, being exploited by an oppressive aristocracy who were selling them off as gladiators.

When it comes to material evidence to support his thesis, Torelli uses as an example evidence from the necropolis at Campo Consolino (Alfedena), contemporary with the settlement at Curino.¹⁷⁰ This necropolis, first published by Mariani at the turn of the century,¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁵ Torelli, 'Per il Sannio'.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. 31.

¹⁶⁷ e.g. for the story of the Spartan Dorieus, who went off to found a colony, unable to bear being ruled by his brother Cleomenes, see Herod. 5. 42. 2. For the story of the Samnite Sacred Spring involving Comius Castronius as leader, see Festus p. 436 L.

¹⁶⁸ Torelli, 'Per il Sannio', 31.

¹⁶⁹ Livy 9. 40. 17; Lucilius' *Aeserninus Samnis* (149–52 M.) leaves open the possibility that 'Samnite' gladiators could be ethnically Samnite.

¹⁷⁰ Torelli, 'Per il Sannio', 33.

¹⁷¹ L. Mariani, 'Aufidena', *Monumenti Antichi* 10 (1901), 225 ff.

was much more fully excavated in the 1970s under the direction of F. Parise Badoni and M. Ruggeri Giove.¹⁷² This team identified three distinct groups of tombs and a possible fourth, the contents of which may have as their *terminus post quem* the late sixth century at the earliest, and the late fifth century BC at the latest. The necropolis is therefore conventionally seen as covering the time period from the late sixth to the fourth centuries BC. Each group covers roughly the same time period, the oldest—and indeed the richest—tombs being found at the centre of each group. Torelli emphasizes signs of social distinction within the necropolis and, in particular, the fact that Parise Badoni and Ruggeri Giove's first group of burials does not contain weapons, while their second and third group do. Torelli suggests that two 'classes' are being distinguished here: one a warrior 'class', and the other a non-warrior 'class'. This supposed polarity in terms of function is, in his view, another sign of the high level of stratification in Samnite society.¹⁷³

At this point, there are obvious points of conflict between the view of Torelli and that of Gaggiotti. It must be said, however, that Gaggiotti's conception of Samnite society during the fourth to third centuries BC is based on no good evidence. He supposes that the building programmes of the fourth to third centuries BC consisted entirely of defensive structures, funded collectively by the community.¹⁷⁴ His main evidence for the second to early first centuries BC, besides prosopography (which I shall consider below), consists of the rural sanctuaries, which, in his view, demonstrate the concentration of wealth within a restricted number of families.¹⁷⁵ The real problem here is that assumptions are apparently being made about what is functional and what is ornamental, and consequently, what would be financed by 'public' funds, and what would be financed by 'private' funds. It is important, however, to admit that we cannot assume that fortifications have no 'ornamental' function in the fourth to third centuries BC. Moreover, we know little enough about precisely how the rural sanctuaries were funded, but we have no documentary

¹⁷² *Sannio* (1980), 84 ff.; F. Parise Badoni, M. Ruggeri Giove, C. Brambilla, and P. Gherardini, 'Necropoli di Alfedena (scavi 1974–1979): proposta di una cronologia relativa', *AION(Arch.)* 4 (1982), 1 ff.

¹⁷³ Torelli, 'Per il Sannio', 33: 'C'è già una società che si è strutturata come aristocrazia guerriera, *belligerum genus*, e che funziona con una divisione di lavoro molto preciso . . .' ('This is already a society which is structured as a warrior aristocracy, and which functions with a very precise division of labour . . .').

¹⁷⁴ Gaggiotti, 'Tre casi regionali italiani', 138.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 138–9.

evidence whatsoever in association with the building of fortifications in the fourth to third centuries BC. His perception of the growth of private property in the second century BC also rests on no good material evidence. Although there are signs that the farmstead/villa at Matrice was extended in the course of the second century BC, and although it looks as if nearby structures previously frequented may have fallen into disuse during that period, it is essential to be very cautious about drawing broader conclusions from what may have been a very localized phenomenon.¹⁷⁶ As we have seen, the most suggestive evidence regarding the conglomeration of property comes from the first to second centuries AD.

There are, nevertheless, also problems associated with Torelli's use of the necropolis at Campo Consolino. For one thing, although it is very interesting indeed that function seems to be distinguished within the necropolis, it is hard to know which group carried greater prestige. The tombs in Group 1, within which no arms were found, contain proportionately more jewellery, made of amber, bronze, and iron,¹⁷⁷ but there is no way of knowing whether jewellery carried more prestige than arms, or vice versa, or whether in fact the image of society projected through burials was of this particular variety of social stratification at all. Differentiation according to age or sex might be at least as important, and is certainly an important factor in representations of the deceased in fourth-century tombs in Paestum and Campania. It is, moreover, important not to exaggerate the degree of difference in the levels of wealth represented by contents of the three groups of tombs. Indeed Parise Badoni remarks on the comparative poverty of the necropolis overall with regard to imported fine-ware, and even the mere quantity of objects, even in the richest of the tombs. The necropolis at Campo Consolino does not compare well with contemporary necropoleis in Campania, for example.¹⁷⁸ There is nothing at Alfedena which compares favourably with the wealth and

¹⁷⁶ For admirable caution regarding the conclusions that can be drawn from the 2nd cent. BC situation at the farmhouse at Matrice, see Lloyd, 'Farming the Highlands', 184.

¹⁷⁷ e.g. tombs 17, 29, 30, 33 for amber; e.g. tombs 8, 27, 33, 34, 38, 54, 55 for bronze and iron; for catalogue, see F. Parise Badoni and M. Ruggeri Giove, *Sannio* (1980), 84 ff.; 90 ff. for discussion of relative finds of female jewellery in Group 1 on the one hand, and Groups 2 and 3 on the other.

¹⁷⁸ Parise Badoni and Ruggeri Giove, *Sannio* (1980), 92; for 4th-cent. tombs of Paestum and Campania, see Pontrandolfo Greco and Rouveret, 'Ideologia funeraria'; Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria'.

emphasis on individuals which is suggested either by Central Adriatic tombs and monuments, or by the painted tombs of Paestum.¹⁷⁹

Moreover, elsewhere in Samnium, other scholars have made reconstructions of local society on the basis of evidence from the contents of tombs which are very different from that of Torelli on the basis of the Campo Consolino necropolis. Johannowsky, for example, emphasizes differences in the contents of tombs at Alfedena, and in other necropoleis in Samnium, increasingly well known through recent excavation, over the course of the sixth to fourth centuries BC. An interesting pattern emerges. He sees a gradual reduction of contents between the sixth and fourth centuries, inside tombs which nevertheless must have been costly to build. He suggests that the reduction of contents was determined by sumptuary legislation of some kind. If this were the case, we would nevertheless be no nearer to a conception of the social structure of the Samnites: sumptuary legislation might, as in Athenian or Roman society, be aimed at consolidating the position of the élite as a whole, or at reducing tension between upper and lower classes. One might be tempted to draw parallels between the situation of fourth-century Samnium and that of contemporary Paestum and Campania, where an apparent emphasis on austerity in iconographical representations of the deceased has been linked with the influence of Tarentine Pythagoreanism in central and southern Italy at this time.¹⁸⁰ At any rate, however, there is very much less emphasis on obvious signs of social differentiation in Johannowsky's study. Similarly, Di Niro's study of the necropolis at Gildone suggests that differentiation in terms of tomb contents was a subtle affair.¹⁸¹ These various studies of necropoleis in Samnium, then, suggest conclusions different from a particular emphasis on social differentiation in the area, especially in the fourth century BC.

As for prosopographical evidence, it is true that some gentilicial names recur in local documentary evidence from the second to first century BC, and in Roman contexts. It is, however, necessary to be cautious when using evidence of this kind. For one thing, it is

¹⁷⁹ There is so far just one painted tomb found in Molise: from Isernia, probably to be dated somewhere in the 3rd cent. BC, and notably cruder in style than contemporary Campanian and Paestan tombs: Giampaola, *Sannio* (1980), 358–9, with pl. 106.1.

¹⁸⁰ W. Johannowsky, 'Il Sannio', *Italici in Magna Grecia: lingue, insediamenti e strutture* (Venosa, 1990), 13 ff., cf. Parise Badoni, Ruggeri Giove, Brambilla, and Gherardini, 'Necropoli di Alfedena'; for Pythagorean influences, see Mele, 'Il pitagorismo'; Rouveret and Greco Pontrandolfo, 'Pittura funeraria', 102 ff.

¹⁸¹ Di Niro, *Samnium* (1991), 61 ff.

important not to exaggerate the small number of names which are attested as magistrates in documentary evidence.¹⁸² It is, in fact, possible to see signs of an expansion of the numbers of office-holders in Oscan-speaking areas in the course of the second century bc. Campanile demonstrates that it is possible to observe progressive differentiation of the office of *meddix* in Oscan-speaking communities in the period after the Roman conquest and before the Social War.¹⁸³ This phenomenon, alongside the importation of Roman magisterial titles in this period, would surely have had the obvious result of expanding the 'honour-roll', as higher numbers of individuals held office at any one time.

Moreover, the recurrence of the same names as magistrates does not tell us anything precise about the nature of the local constitutions. In comparison, it has been well said that stating that the Roman constitution was always in some sense oligarchical does not get us very far, unless we consider other features, such as answerability and the representation of the people.¹⁸⁴ Unfortunately, very little is known about such features in the Central Apennines. It is hard to know how far the situation in Pompeii is comparable. Here, two different names for assembly are attested: *komparakio*-, and *kombennio*-.¹⁸⁵ It seems most unlikely that the Pompeians would have used two different names for the same institution.¹⁸⁶ Campanile's suggestion that one is the senate and one is the popular assembly, is surely to be preferred: it is not, however, possible to establish which was which.¹⁸⁷ There is, however, some evidence for popular assemblies in the Central Apennines, so that it cannot then be assumed that the situation in this significantly less urbanized area was very dissimilar. Within the

¹⁸² For a selection of names of *meddikes toutikoi* in pre-Social War Samnium,

¹⁸³ E. Campanile, 'Le strutture magistratuali degli stati osci', in E. Campanile and C. Letta (eds.), *Studi sulle magistrature indigene e municipali in area italica* (Pisa, 1979), 15 ff.

¹⁸⁴ Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 4, commenting on R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939), 7.

¹⁸⁵ Ve. 17, 19 for *komparakio*-, Ve. 11, 12, 18 for *kombennio*-, Bantia, south of Samnium, has *tribuni plebis* (*Tabula Osca*, Ve. 2), possibly attested even in the 1st cent. bc: the date of the Oscan law of the *Tabula Bantina* has been much debated: for a Sullan date, see H. Galsterer, 'Die lex Osca tabulae Bantinae: Eine Bestandsaufnahme', *Chiron* 1 (1971), 191 ff.; for a pre-Sullan date, see M. Torelli, 'Una nuova epigrafe di Bantia e la cronologia dello statuto municipale bantino', *Athen.* ns 61 (1983), 252 ff.

¹⁸⁶ Pace Salmon, *Samnium*, 93.

¹⁸⁷ 'Le strutture magistratuali', 24.

third-century law of Rapino, the *tota marouca* apparently functions as a popular assembly.¹⁸⁸ For the second-century Samnites, there is no clear evidence for a popular assembly. Although it has been suggested that the theatre at Pietrabbondante functioned as a *comitium*, because of the apparent influence of the *comitium*-model in its structure, there is no way to prove this.

Some of the other arguments used in support of the view that second- to early first-century BC society in the Central Apennines was highly differentiated positively beg questions. As we have seen, Gaggiotti's main evidence for the concentration of wealth within a restricted aristocracy in Samnium of the second to early first centuries BC is the building of the rural sanctuaries. For Gaggiotti, the important aspect of these building programmes is the self-advertisement of the magistrates associated with the various phases of their construction. He believes, moreover, that these buildings represent the conspicuous use of 'privatized' wealth. The communal aspect of these sanctuaries is, for him, a secondary consideration.¹⁸⁹ To take another example, the Biferno Valley team were puzzled by the mismatch between the size of local 'villa' sites, and the quality of amenities and decoration: fair-sized 'villas' in other areas surveyed, such as south Etruria, would be expected to be more lavishly equipped and decorated than Samnite 'villas' which were comparable in size. The team suggested a resolution: members of the élite could live in the towns, and ride out to the 'villas', a pattern of behaviour which is attested in some ancient documents and literary sources, but which does not fully account for the low level of decoration in the Samnite 'villas'.¹⁹⁰

It must, however, surely remain a possibility that members of the local élites were using their wealth in ways which were to some extent different from usual patterns in Tyrrhenian Italy: in the examples given above, there is apparently some degree of effort involved in making the evidence fit more expected patterns for second-century

¹⁸⁸ Ve. 218. ¹⁸⁹ Gaggiotti, 'Tre casi regionali italici', 138.

¹⁹⁰ Lloyd and Barker, 'Rural Settlement', 301-3. For farm agents, see e.g. *CIL* ix. 2827, 2829. For the owner riding out, see Xen. *Oec.* 11, cf. Cato *De Agri Cult.* 2. 1, for instructions to the paterfamilias concerning his arrival at, and tour of, the farm. The suggestion of Lloyd and Barker is not, however, entirely convincing, considering the importance of the rural villa as an integral part of conspicuous high-living on the part of the Italian élites of late Republican/early Imperial times: e.g. Purcell, 'Town in Country'; Wallace-Hadrill, 'Elites and Trade', 248-9; Giardina, 'Uomini e spazi aperti', 75.

Italy. Alternative interpretations remain inviting. If the rural sanctuaries do represent the private wealth of individuals rather than communal resources, it still seems that the élites were significantly more interested in putting their funds into these sanctuaries than into private dwelling, or the improvement of civic buildings. Within this context, Patterson's method of analysing the distinctive character of mountain society becomes very suggestive: he focuses on Samnium, where the archaeological evidence is most abundant, and finds here a significant time-lag involved in the development of features like baths and aqueducts, associated with a Roman-style 'good life'.¹⁹¹

It is important here to emphasize a major problem associated with reconstructing society in the Central Apennines: we simply know very much more about Samnium than about any other neighbouring area in this region. Ultimately, it is hard to know the extent to which it is legitimate to make general statements about the Central Apennines as a whole based on the evidence from Samnium. There are hints that Samnium may have been rather a special case: her exceptionally high density of free persons, the emphasis on group identity and the persistence of Oscan in public documentation may all point to a very individual local situation. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to expect there to be broad similarities between the situation in other areas of the Central Apennines and Samnium, and to expect there to be broad differences between the peoples of the Central Apennines on the one hand and the Etruscans and Umbrians on the other, not least because of differences in the degree of urbanization and numbers of free persons, as well as relative degrees of senatorial success.

It is tempting to link allegiance to social models which are apparently substantially different from the Roman urban model together with indications that the élites of the Central Apennines were substantially less successful in the Roman senate than were the Etruscan and Umbrian élites. If I am right to suspect that there was less emphasis on displays of private wealth amongst the élites of the Central Apennines than there was in the more urbanized parts of Tyrrhenian Italy, it may be that Roman images of frugality and austerity are reflections of the perception of difference in the upper stratum of society. The high manpower figures for Samnium in particular reflect a thriving peasantry, the existence of which would also encourage the reconstruction of a society which was, for the

¹⁹¹ Patterson, 'Settlement, City and Élite'.

ancient world, comparatively equal. These differences might at times be viewed positively, and even held up as a model for élite behaviour, but the very double-edged nature of Roman ideology regarding model élite behaviour meant that élites from the Central Apennines were certainly not guaranteed success in the Roman senate. It is hardly surprising that Samnite success in the senate really begins to take off only in the first to second centuries AD, when allegiance to the distinctive models of local society is really diminishing.

I would certainly not deny that sites like Monte Vairano and Saepinum show that the local élites were beginning, particularly in the later second century BC, to emphasize their wealth in private contexts in a manner which can begin to be compared with the situation in the more urbanized parts of Tyrrhenian Italy. Nor would I underestimate the possibilities offered for self-advertisement in association with the magnificent rural sanctuaries of the Central Apennines. Nevertheless, it seems important also not to dismiss indications of a substantially different mentality on the part of the local élites, and one which might well have clashed with Roman ideas about élite behaviour.

Rural Piety, Witches, and Snake-Charmers: Religion in the Central Apennines

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I explore the processes of Roman selection and construction of images of religious practices amongst peoples of the Central Apennines. In pursuit of this aim, I do not consider Roman discourse alone. To some extent, archaeology can tell us more about the Roman process of selection by showing what was left out of Roman constructions of religion in the Central Apennines. For example, the Greek and Roman literary sources tend to emphasize the marginal and sinister aspect of the religious activity of peoples of the Central Apennines, such as their role as witches and indigent seers. The archaeological record of the Central Apennines on the other hand provides us with abundant examples of architecturally impressive sanctuaries in which, all the indications are, nothing but 'mainstream' Central Italian cult practices were performed, and with which, the epigraphic record tells us, the local élites were closely associated. I do not, however, propose merely to 'test' Roman ideology by measuring it against archaeological 'reality'. For example, the cult of the goddess Angitia is attested in the material evidence, and her snake-charming priests are very unlikely to have been a Roman fantasy. I shall argue, however, that the cult of Angitia is likely to have had very different functions and significance in local society on the one hand and in Roman ideology on the other hand. I shall also try to challenge the assumption that Roman construction of peoples of the Central Apennines was entirely a one-way process, by suggesting that, in some circumstances, it could have been advantageous to these peoples to reinforce Roman stereotypes by playing the roles assigned to them.

1. THE TWO FACES OF THE ROMAN TRADITION

When peoples of the Central Apennines are depicted in Greek and Latin literature, they are frequently attributed religious or supernatural roles. There are two distinct strands in the tradition. One strand is the basic religious piety of the Sabines and 'Sabelli', and their closeness to the gods, far removed from behaviour in corrupt, late Republican/early Imperial Rome. By the later Republic, the Sabines had become moral and religious examples for Rome, and this role was retrojected into the remote past, so that, for example, according to Varro, many of Rome's gods and religious institutions were imported from the Sabine territory at the time of Romulus and Titus Tatius.¹ The piety of Sabines and 'Sabelli' is part and parcel of the promotion of them as admirable moral examples for Rome, which, I argued in Chapter 2, became possible as a result of their incorporation into the Roman citizenship.

Another strand is the sinister role assigned to peoples of the Central Apennines: the supernatural powers particularly associated with these peoples, such as snake-charming and witchcraft, as well as the sacrilegious secret rite of the Samnites described by Livy.² Although this aspect of the peoples of the Central Apennines survives into late antiquity (and beyond), it is in tension with the specific promotion of the piety of the 'Sabelli', and with the promotion of the virtue of peoples of the Central Apennines in general. This sinister aspect of peoples of the Central Apennines can surely be best understood in the context of 'pre-incorporation' imagery, within which these peoples are basically cast in the role of barbarians. It may be that manifestations of this aspect in Late Republican and Imperial literature mark a 'survival' of pre-Social War ideology, perhaps encouraged by the activities of the peoples themselves at Rome, trading off their reputation for supernatural activity.

(a) Sabine/'Sabellian' Piety and Rome's Heritage

Sabine piety is, in the literary sources of the later Republic and early Empire, one element within the overall picture of Sabine austerity and

¹ LL 5. 74. Varro claims his source here to be *annales*, a source which cannot, of course, be precisely dated, but which at least suggests that the tradition is earlier than the mid-1st cent. bc.

² Livy 10. 38. 5 ff.; cf. 10. 39. 16.

uprightness. So, for example, Livy's Numa, the great religious innovator of Regal Rome, must be Sabine rather than Greek, 'instructum . . . non tam peregrinis artibus quam disciplina tetrica ac tristi veterum Sabinorum, quo genere nullum quondam incorruptius fuit'.³ Livy too introduces a pious Sabine peasant in the reign of Servius Tullius. This peasant is bringing a cow to sacrifice at the altar of Diana, an auspicious cow which will bring imperial rule to the people whose representative sacrifices her. The peasant is, however, duped by the Roman priest at the altar, when he goes to wash his hands in reverence for the gods, on the instruction of the priest.⁴ In Horace *Odes* 3. 6, Rome's valiant ancestors in their Sabellian landscape stand in contrast with the contemporary neglect of the gods in the city described in the first part of the poem.⁵ Elsewhere, specific cults or religious practices are attributed to the Sabines. Thus, as we have seen, Varro attributes to the Sabines the origins of many Italian cults: this is part of Rome's legacy from the Regal period, a time when, according to Roman tradition, she was peculiarly receptive to the influences of the various peoples of Italy.

Fifty years ago, E. C. Evans made a valiant attempt to look for reasons why Varro should have attributed to the Sabines a long list of gods worshipped at Rome,⁶ and her efforts illustrate the difficulties associated with trying to find archaeological and epigraphical confirmation of Roman images of Sabinum. She set out to examine archaeological and epigraphic evidence from Sabinum and some nearby areas for the cults mentioned by Varro. While she was clearly aware that Varro's Sabine deities might have more to do with Varro's ideological position than with what could actually be seen on the ground in Sabine territory,⁷ her investigation is largely a catalogue of the occurrences of the various gods in inscriptions, or cult edifices possibly to be assigned to one of the gods in the list.

At times, Evans' mode of enquiry is very unrewarding. For example, Minerva appears only once in an inscription from Sabine territory,⁸ and is rarely attested at all in central-eastern Italy. When she does appear in this area, it is at a late date. Looking for her in a

³ Livy 1. 18.

⁴ Ibid. 1. 45.

⁵ Hor. *Odes* 3. 6. 37 ff.

⁶ E. Evans, *The Cults of the Sabine Territory* (Rome, 1939).

⁷ e.g. *ibid.* p. v, 'It is apparent that Varro looked upon the Sabini as founders, and agents of transmission into Rome, of certain religious cults which, in point of fact, flourished throughout the interior of the Italian peninsula.'

⁸ The only inscriptional evidence in Sabine territory comes from Reate: *CIL* ix. 4674.

Faliscan and Etruscan context is very much more promising: for Statius in the *Silvae*, she is *Tyrrhena Minerva*,⁹ which is unlikely to mean simply that she 'has power over the Tyrrhenian Sea' rather than that she was thought to have her origins with the Etruscans.¹⁰ She is important in Etruscan lightning-lore, and appears in the place of Athena in mythological scenes on Etruscan mirrors.¹¹ It is well worth noting in this context that Varro has no long list of deities of reputedly Etruscan origin to match the 'Sabine' list. On the contrary, while the archaeological evidence for a period of Etruscan domination at Rome is clear, Etruscan influences and origins are minimized or even denied in the *De Lingua Latina*.¹² Presumably, Varro was more interested in 'recalling' Rome's 'country' roots—as represented by the Sabines—than in 'recalling' her urban past.¹³ Minerva is perhaps the most extreme example of a god who does not obviously belong to the Sabine context to which Varro ascribes her, but numerous other deities to whom Varro attributed Sabine origins seem to be at least as much at home over a wide area of central Italy. Feronia, for example, is attested at Rome, Tarracina, amongst the Vestini, in Picenum and in Umbria as well as within her supposedly native Sabine territory.¹⁴

One reason why little can be gleaned archaeologically and epigraphically from the Sabine territory in support of the Roman perception of Sabine ethnic difference is that this area was particularly subject, and from early days, to a variety of influences, not least Etruscan, leaving the whole question of Sabine ethnicity even in the archaic period much vexed in contemporary scholarship.¹⁵ From the early third century BC onwards, Roman influences predominate, and the

⁹ Statius *Silv.* 2. 2. 2.

¹⁰ Evans, *Cults*, 163 comments on *Tyrrhena Minerva*, 'one could hardly regard her cult as of Etruscan origin on that basis, since the epithet may refer only to her power over the Tuscan sea'. This seems to be over-sceptical, particularly in the face of the other evidence which points to the importance of Minerva within Etruscan religion.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 163–4.

¹² The rare mentions of Etruscan origins and influences in the *De Lingua Latina* are themselves revealing. At 5. 46, Vertumnus is said to be the chief god of the Etruscans. As his statue stood in the Vicus Tuscus, it would be hard to avoid this inference. At 6. 28, Varro rejects the Etruscan etymology of Ides in favour of a Sabine etymology. In 5. 161, *atrium* is related to the Etruscan *Atria*. At 5. 143, many Latin *oppida* are said to have been founded *Etrusco ritu*. In both these cases, the urban character of perceived Etruscan influence is of obvious relevance.

¹³ See e.g. P. Pouthier, *Ops et la conception divine de l'abondance dans la religion romaine jusqu'à la mort d'Auguste* (Rome, 1981), 40.

¹⁴ Evans, *Cults*, (1939), 156–7.

¹⁵ See e.g. Cristofani Martelli, 'Poggio Sommavilla'; M. Firmani, 'Panorama archeologico sabino alla luce di recenti acquisizioni', in *PSCS* (1985), 99 ff.

third to first centuries BC are not times of great urban development.¹⁶ Much of what can be seen today, or at least much of what could still be seen several centuries ago, dates from the Imperial period.¹⁷ Even from this rather late material, however, one can begin to appreciate the problem of reconciling Roman perception with material remains: for example, the Hadrianic mosaic of the polymastic Diana (associated with cities of Asia Minor, and with Massilia, a city of dubious reputation) found at Poggio Mirteto, and the Colossus of Cybele at Amiternum are not quite in keeping with images of staunch reverence of the 'native' cults of the Italian countryside.¹⁸

Looking for signs of distinctive religious practice in Sabinum is, then, an unrewarding business. Certainly, the lack of prosperity in Sabinum until the Imperial period, and particularly of prosperity of an urban nature, especially in contrast with the flourishing of urban centres in other areas neighbouring Rome (Latium, Etruria and Campania particularly in the second century BC) may have helped to encourage images of pious and pre-corrupt Sabines.¹⁹ It is worth considering further the relationship between the polarization of Rome as a city and Sabinum as 'country' and images of Sabine piety. The idea that farmers, and particularly small farmers, are more prone to acts of the gods—or forces of nature—and are subsequently more likely to be meticulous in their attention to the details of ritual (whether this is considered to be 'religious' or 'superstitious') is widespread both in ancient and in modern societies. In this context, one might think of D  tienne's interesting theory of farming as ritual in Hesiod's *Works and Days*,²⁰ and Virgil's choice of farming as his focus in the *Georgics*, a poem which focuses on the problems of picking up the pieces in the aftermath of the spiritual, social, and political turmoil of the last years of the Republic. Clearly, there was no lack of rituals associated with activities within, and the topography of, the city of Rome itself,²¹ but the idealization of rituals specifically linked with farming may have accompanied anxiety about urbanization.²²

¹⁶ See Ch. 3, s. 3(a) above.

¹⁷ e.g. for Amiternum, see Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 19–24.

¹⁸ Evans, *Cults*, 51–3 for the Diana; 114–15 for Cybele; cf. Segenni, *Amiternum*, 71 for the precocious arrival of oriental cults in the territory of Amiternum.

¹⁹ See ch. 3, s. 3(a) above.

²⁰ M. D  tienne, *Crise agraire et attitude religieuse chez H  siod  * (Brussels, 1963).

²¹ e.g. Pliny *NH* 28. 28, for superstitions at Rome regarding hair- and nail-cutting.

²² See e.g. Pliny *NH* 28. 28, where the author remarks on a superstition *pagana lege* ('according to the custom of the countryside'): women in farming areas are not allowed to twirl their spindles when walking along the road, or even to carry them uncovered, for to do so would ruin the harvest and everything else.

(b) *Angitia and the Snake-Charmers*

According to a fragment of Gnaeus Gellius, written in the late second century BC, the Marsi were descended from Angitia, daughter of Aeëtes and sister of Circe and Medea. To Angitia they owed their knowledge of preventing and healing snake-bites.²³ According to Lucilius, Marsic chanting could make snakes explode,²⁴ while for Silius Italicus, Marsi sang songs to put them to sleep, and used songs and herbs to heal the viper's bite.²⁵ Virgil's Marruvian and priestly Umbro, devotee of Angitia, used herbs to cure snake-bite, a skill which proved of no avail to him when he was fatally wounded in battle.²⁶ For Pliny the Elder, Marsi, like Psylli, possessed the natural power to frighten snakes using their whole bodies,²⁷ while Aulus Gellius explicitly states that these Marsi retain their power over snakes by endogamy.²⁸ According to Galen, Marsi were a source of medical lore, knowledgeable both about curing snake-bite and about the curative properties of the snake-venom itself.²⁹ In 'Aelius Lampridius' account of the reign of Elagabalus, the outrageous emperor had Marsic priests collect the snakes, which he then unleashed onto crowds gathered before the games.³⁰ There is a late, and somewhat predictable, contamination of the name Angitia with the Latin *anguis*, 'snake', resulting in the form *Anguitia*.³¹

Already, the wide variety of literary sources for the association of Marsi with snake-charming and curing snake-bite begins to suggest that this ability is something more than a Roman fantasy: from the *Satires* of Lucilius to Gnaeus Gellius' collection of local mythology to the medical and 'scientific' writers Galen and Pliny the Elder. Angitia is certainly attested epigraphically in the territory of the Marsi and, in fact, amongst other peoples of the Central Apennines. Within Marsic territory, her name is attested in three inscriptions from Luco (Lucus Angitiaie). The earliest of these is the late fourth-century BC dedication to the goddess, which reads, 'on behalf of the Marsic legions'.³² She is also attested once in a dedicatory *cippus* from Civita d'An-

²³ Fr. 9 P. = Solinus 2. 28. ²⁴ 575-6 M. ²⁵ *Pun.* 8. 495 ff.

²⁶ *Aen.* 7. 750-60. ²⁷ *NH* 28. 30; cf. 28. 19. ²⁸ 16. 11. 1-2.

²⁹ 12. 316-17 K.; 11. 143 K.; 8, 150 K. ³⁰ 23. 2.

³¹ *Ibid. Orig.* 9. 2. 88.

³² *CIL* i. (2nd ed.) 5 = *ILLRP* 7 = Ve. 228a (Marsic-Latin); cf. *CIL* ix. 3885; C. Letta and S. D'Amato, *Epigrafia della regione dei Marsi* (Milan, 1975), no. 176 (second century AD). ³³ *CIL* i. (2nd edn). 1763 = Letta and D'Amato, *Epigrafia*, no. 178.

³⁴ Ve. 239, Ila 13.

tino.³³ Her name is also attested in the Umbrian Iguvine Tablets,³⁴ amongst the Paeligni,³⁵ Vestini,³⁶ and Sabines,³⁷ as well as at Isernia.³⁸

Local evidence for snake-charming is more difficult to establish, although it is clear that snakes were of symbolic importance in the Marsic territory: a distinctive type of cylindrical *cippus* featuring a hemispherical top with a coiled snake on it was characteristic of this region throughout the Imperial period.³⁹ This is obviously not, however, direct evidence of snake-charming.

The anomalous use of snakes within the modern, Christian tradition of the Central Apennines has been remarked upon in modern literature, and assertions have been made about the continuity of pagan cults within a Christian context. Much has been made of the celebration of the festival of the tenth-century San Domenico Abate at Cocullo, a village which would have fallen within the territory of the Marsi in ancient times. This festival is held each year on the first Thursday of May, when the *serpari* (local snake-charmers) collect wild snakes to offer to San Domenico who, according to local tradition, has powers associated with a range of dangers faced by farmers and shepherds in this area, along with their animals and dogs: he is able to ward off wolves, and can cure snake-bite, rabies, and, more mundanely, toothache. The festival involves handling of snakes both by the *serpari* and by priests, and the highlight comes when the snakes are placed by the *serpari* on the crown of the statue of San Domenico, around which they nestle. The statue of San Domenico, with its halo of live snakes, is then carried around the village in a solemn procession, and money is pinned onto it by the local people.⁴⁰

This kind of 'evidence' for snake-charming in association with the cult of Angitia in antiquity, while certainly colourful, is very problematic. It is as well to note that the history of cult-practices associated with San Domenico Abate have not been the subject of sophisticated studies. Assertions about the continuity of a tradition of snake-charming from pagan times in the local literature are likely to be influenced

³⁵ Ve. 204–8; 211; *CIL* ix. 3074 for Sulmo.

³⁶ *CIL* ix. 3515 for Furfo.

³⁷ For attestation of Angitia at Trebula Mutuesca, see M. Torelli 'Trebula Mutuesca: Iscrizioni corrette ed inedite', *RAL* 18 (1963), 250.

³⁸ Ve. 140.

³⁹ Letta and D'Amato, *Epigrafia*, Table IX, pl. 23; cf. Letta, *I Marsi*, 145.

⁴⁰ For a full account of the festival at Cocullo, see T. Ashby, *Some Italian Scenes and Festivals* (London, 1929), 112 ff., where extracts from the interesting article by Professor W. H. Woodward (*Manchester Guardian*, 1 June, 1909), who visited Cocullo at the turn of the century, are quoted. I visited the festival myself on 7 May 1992.

by contemporary self-definition, in itself an interesting phenomenon. It is as well to admit the possibility that snake-handling in Cocullo was a self-conscious 'revival' (or 'recreation') of practices associated with the area in antiquity. Although the festival of San Domenico at Cocullo is suggestive, it cannot legitimately be used as a means of studying the cult of Angitia. 'Tradition', after all, does not have a life of its own, but is constantly remade.

Although the cult of Angitia and the practice of snake-charming are unlikely to be entirely figments of the Roman imagination, it is far from clear that these practices had the same significance in Roman society on the one hand, and in local society on the other. To begin on a general level, it is worth considering the position of Marsic augurs plying their trade at Rome, in the context of other itinerant seers. Cicero, in the *De Divinatione*, quotes Ennius' contemptuous reference to the influx of village hacks, glossed by Cicero as 'Marsic augurs', along with astrologers, village *haruspices*, diviners relying on the goddess Isis and interpreters of dreams, all plying their trade around the circus, meaning, surely, the Roman circus.⁴¹ One problem with this passage is, of course, that there is no way of telling whether Ennius himself referred specifically to Marsic augurs, or whether this is simply a Ciceronian gloss. Whichever is the case, however, it is possible to see signs of Roman annoyance at the presence of foreign seers, not 'tied' securely to a local cult, and certainly not part of established Roman cult practice. It is interesting here to compare Livy's statements that, as the Hannibalic War dragged on, the superstitious hackery of, amongst others, the rustic *plebs* driven by necessity, helped to bring about the decline of the ancestral religious tradition of Rome.⁴² At first sight, this pronouncement seems to be hardly in keeping with Livy's general approval of the piety of country-people, often in contrast with general decline on the part of urban Romans. One can recall here the examples of Sabine piety cited in the example above. But there is surely not necessarily any contradiction here. I suggest that when Livy speaks of the decline of ancestral, Roman religion, he is thinking of *rustici* (i.e. people from outside the city of Rome) not in their role as exemplars of piety for corrupt Romans, but as hawking their religious wares on the margins of Roman society. This kind of activity would surely be considered in a very different light from either country cults within country settings

⁴¹ Enn. Tr. fr. 134 b J. = Cic. *De Div.* 1. 132.

⁴² Livy 25. 1. 6.

or from gods once foreign to Roman territory but now recognized by the élite in the religious map and calendar of the city.

It is worth looking in more detail at the literary sources, to try to establish some of the ways in which snake-charming and snake-bite healing in particular were perceived. At several points, these activities seem to be closely associated with witchcraft. In both Ovid's *De Medicamine Faciei Liber*⁴³ and Silius Italicus' *Punica*,⁴⁴ Marsic snake-charming and snake-bite healing are mentioned in the context of magical powers which pervert the course of nature, such as stopping rivers in their tracks, and bringing the moon down from the sky by shrieking: precisely the kind of 'night witchcraft' which was considered to be particularly sinister and dangerous in the ancient world.⁴⁵ It is also worth wondering about the overtones of the supposed descent of the Marsi from the family which produced Medea and Circe, two of the most sinister figures in ancient mythology.

Why did the Romans seem to have found the Marsic snake-practitioners so strange, and why was their activity apparently associated with 'night witchcraft'? After all, snakes are common enough in the iconography of 'mainstream' gods, such as Demeter, Ceres, and, above all, Aesculapius.⁴⁶ According to Pliny the Elder, the snake's special protective powers meant that it was kept as a domestic pet in many Roman homes.⁴⁷ Modern theories suggest that the snake's special significance is derived from its ambiguous and 'marginal' character within the structures of ancient thought, a legless land animal mediating between the world below and the surface of the earth.⁴⁸ Certainly, the use of snake-venom, a substance which had the power to bring both life and death, was of great importance in ancient medical practice. In the case of Aesculapius, the god was actually in the form of a snake when he accompanied Q. Ogulnius Gallus from

⁴³ 39. ⁴⁴ 8. 495 ff.

⁴⁵ For the use of the phrase 'night witch' to refer to the kind of witch who cannot be identified and accused, and who attacks the 'social and emotional basis of common life', see R. Gordon, 'Religion in the Early Empire: The Civic Compromise and its Limits', in M. Beard and J. North (eds.), *Pagan Priests* (London, 1990), 235 ff., 254 n. 66; cf. L. Mair, *Witchcraft* (London, 1968), ch. 3; cf. N. Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: an Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt* (London, 1975), 206 ff.

⁴⁶ For a general summary of the role of snakes in Roman religion, see J. Toynbee, *Animals in Roman Life and Art* (London, 1973).

⁴⁷ Pliny *NH* 29. 72; for the ill-omened death of the Emperor Tiberius' pet snake, see Suet. *Tib.* 72.

⁴⁸ G. E. R. Lloyd, *Science, Folklore and Ideology* (Cambridge, 1983), 10–11.

Epidaurus to the Tiber island.⁴⁹ Snakes are also frequently found effecting cures in temples of Aesculapius/Asclepius, but here they are either manifestations of the god himself or agents of the god: there is no evidence of human intermediaries handling the snakes within this cult.⁵⁰ In some cultures, snake-handling and power over snakes in general is clearly considered to be special but by no means subversive behaviour.⁵¹ But snake-handling in Greek and Roman thought is evocative rather of the sinister, and potentially subversive, blurring of boundaries between gods and men, and men and animals, which is associated with the frenzy of (significantly female) Bacchantes.⁵²

The peculiar power over snakes possessed by Marsic individuals and, perhaps, by their counterparts in the neighbouring territories of the Central Apennines, may account in part for the original attribution to Angitia of a family tree consisting of the sinister wizards of Greek thought, and for the association of their activities with 'night witchcraft'. But it may also be that the idea of snake-charming, along with other sinister 'superstitious' practices attributed to the peoples of the Central Apennines, had such a hold on the imagination because these peoples had proved such intractable enemies to Rome both in the course of the Samnite Wars of the Middle Republic and, very much more recently, in the course of the Social—or Marsic—War. Letta also makes the interesting suggestion that the Marsi used their sinister reputation for propagandist purposes during the Social War: encouraging Roman soldiers to believe that they had supernatural powers could well be expected to bring havoc.⁵³

The cult of Angitia, in its local contexts, is likely to have had very different overtones from the sinister aspect which Marsic snake-

⁴⁹ Livy 10. 47. 6–7; Per. 11, 29. 11. 1; Ovid *Met.* 15. 622–744; Val. Max. 1. 8. 2.

⁵⁰ See the collection of sources with discussion for the healing rites of Asclepius in E. Edelstein and L. Edelstein (eds.), *Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies* (Baltimore, 1945).

⁵¹ e.g. Certain groups of Native Americans were considered to be aided by snake or lion 'familiaris', which gave them power over the species as a whole and an honoured place in society, just as magicians on certain Melanesian islands have as their 'servants' (familiaris) snakes or sharks: M. Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (London, 1972), 36.

⁵² See e.g. C. Segal, 'The Menace of Dionysus: Sex Roles and Reversals in Euripides' *Bacchae*', in Peradotto and Sullivan, *Women*, 195 ff.

⁵³ Letta, *I Marsi*, 99. It can, in various circumstances, be advantageous to an ethnic group to take on and exploit the dominant group's construction of them. Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies*, 4, gives an interesting example of this phenomenon: in the 16th cent. Travellers might gain acceptance of a kind amongst Gorgios by 'presenting an exotic identity', and dancing or telling fortunes.

charming seems to have had in Roman thought. For one thing, it is clear that, in her local context, Angitia's sphere was broader than snakes alone. In a Paelignian inscription, she appears with the epithet *cer(r)ia* (*cerealis*),⁵⁴ so that she, like the numerous gods given the epithet *kerr-* in the second-century BC Agnone Tablet⁵⁵ was associated with the generation of crops and possibly animals as well. Interestingly enough, in the festival of San Domenico at Cocullo mentioned above, snakes are not the only offering to the saint: nuts and early fruits were once also gathered in abundance to give to him.⁵⁶ In this particular festival at least, the 'saint of snakes' had broader associations, just as Angitia seems to have done. Elsewhere, there are hints of aspects of the cult of Angitia about which we know very little, and which are certainly not mentioned in any of the literary sources. For example, a Latin inscription from Castrano contains a plural version of her name, *anciti*, suggesting that some sort of family of deities was associated with her.⁵⁷ Such details suggest that the Roman literary sources give us selective details of the cult of Angitia.

It is also well worth looking at what can be known of the contexts of epigraphic attestations of the name of Angitia, as these contexts suggest that the cult of Angitia at the local level was by no means a marginal one. For example, there is a gold ring inscribed in Oscan from Isernia, which an individual, *Stenis Kalaviis*, dedicates to the goddess: this is a costly gift, implying that the donor was a wealthy individual.⁵⁸ There was apparently a cult-place for Angitia a little to the north of the modern town of Luco, on the west bank of the Fucine lake, within Marsic territory in ancient times. Certainly, one of the three inscriptions from Luco that mention Angita is in the form of a bronze plate, with the inscription *pro le[cio]nibus martses*, hardly the offering of a marginal individual. Virgil's reference to a *nemus Angitiae* to which the priestly Umbro was attached has been identified with the ancient site near Luco.⁵⁹ The modern name Luco, and ancient epigraphic references to Angitia, plus analogy with attested place-names such as Lucus Feroniae, have led to the reconstruction of

⁵⁴ Ve. 204–8, 211.

⁵⁵ Ve. 147.

⁵⁶ Cf. n. 40 above.

⁵⁷ *CIL* ix. 3515; cf. *CIL* ix. 3074, from Sulmo. A plural of the name also appears in the Iguvine Tablets: Ve. 239, Ila 13.

⁵⁸ Ve. 140: *Stenis. Kalaviis. anagtiat. diuuiat. dunum. deded* ('Stenis Kalaviis gave a gift to the goddess Angitia').

⁵⁹ For the Luco inscription, see *CIL* i/2. 5 = *ILLRP* 7 = Ve. 228a; *Aen.* 7. 759 for *nemus Angitiae*.

the name *Lucus Angitia*, a name which is never actually directly attested in antiquity.⁶⁰ This site seems to have become a *municipium* after the Social War, and its inhabitants may appear as *Lucenses* in Pliny the Elder's list of Marsic municipals.⁶¹ In one inscription found at Luco, two *quinquennales* appear restoring a wall *ex p.p. Angitia*: they are apparently using money from the temple treasury.⁶² A second-century AD *cippus*, also found at Luco, marks out the boundary of the *p(opuli) Albens(is)* and the *Marso(rum) Angiti(ae)*.⁶³ *Angiti(ae)* here may be a reference to the territory attributed to the sanctuary rather than to the inhabited centre itself, but this question should be left open.⁶⁴ There has been no positive identification of a temple of Angitia at Luco. Two sites have been proposed, one at the top of the hill, where a ruined building and some ex-voto offerings were found, and one in the lowest part of the town, the area known as 'il tesoro'. Neither site offers any signs of distinctive cult practice. The votive offerings which can be identified in the 'tesoro' area are small bronze *Hercules*.⁶⁵ Certainly, the lack of signs of distinctive cult practice cannot rule out either site: it seems likely that the images of cult practice associated with Angitia which appear in the literary sources are selective, and emphasize its more unusual aspects in the eyes of the Greek and Roman authors.

In its local contexts, the cult of Angitia is likely to have been sponsored by the local élites. This certainly seems to be indicated by the appearance of the name of Angitia on a gold ring, the dedication to the goddess on behalf of the Marsic legions, and the existence of a cult-place after which a settlement seems to have been named. The Marsic snake-charmers described by Greek and Roman authors apparently had their origins in a priesthood of Angitia. For Virgil, *Umbro* is a *sacerdos*,⁶⁶ and for 'Aelius Lampridius', the Marsi hired by Elagabalus are also priests.⁶⁷ This priesthood may have been hereditary, as the profession of the Marsic practitioners at Rome is said to have been in the early Empire. Aulus Gellius certainly says that these Marsi were endogamous, while Pliny the Elder makes comparisons with the endogamous *Psylli*, as well as the *Ophiogenes* of Cyprus, who reputedly exposed their new-born children to the bite of poisonous snakes in

⁶⁰ For discussion of this reconstruction, see Letta and D'Amato, *Epigrafia*, 292 n. 15.

⁶¹ *NH* 3. 12. 106; cf. Letta, *I Marsi*, 128–9.

⁶² *CIL* ix. 3885 = *ILS* 4024.

⁶³ Letta and D'Amato, *Epigrafia*, no. 176.

⁶⁴ For discussion of this point, see *ibid.* 292–3.

⁶⁵ Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 103–5.

⁶⁶ *Aen.* 7. 750.

⁶⁷ 23. 2.

order to test their wives' fidelity.⁶⁸ While élite association with the cult of Angitia at a local level seems clear, it is not possible to know for certain whether priests of Angitia actually were members of the local élites,⁶⁹ or whether they were merely sponsored by the élites.

(c) *Magic and Witchcraft*

The magical repertoire attributed to the peoples of the Central Apennines in the literary sources is largely conventional: Paelignian and Marsic spells are believed to have the power to hold lovers and prevent them from leaving, to make friends return, and generally to 'bewitch' lovers, afflicting them with terrible passion.⁷⁰ According to Horace, Sabellae are fortune-tellers.⁷¹ As we have seen, Silius Italicus, in his catalogue of Italians, attributes to the Marsi a more extensive magical repertoire, presumably at least partly because he is not constrained by the limited subject-matter of love-elegy.⁷² They are thus attributed the familiar repertoire of 'night witches', apparently skilled to confound the forces of nature in general.⁷³ Perhaps most interesting of all are ancient ideas about *strigae*, a mysterious bird-like species which even Pliny the Elder finds impossible to classify definitively as either real or mythological.⁷⁴ But according to some authorities, these are old women transformed by night-magic into birds.⁷⁵ This particular witch-belief had a long history in Italy, and has given to modern Italian one of its regular words for witch, 'strega'.⁷⁶ According to the manuscript tradition of Ovid's *Fasti* preferred for good reason by Frazer and the Teubner editors, these *strigae* were a Marsic speciality.⁷⁷

⁶⁸ Aulus Gellius 16. 11. 1–2; Pliny *NH* 7. 14–15; cf. 38. 30.

⁶⁹ The supposed practice of endogamy on the part of the Marsic snake-charmers might in fact tell against their identification with the Marsic élite. The Marsic élite were clearly interested in marriage to outsiders: see e.g. D.S. 37. 15 for the conversation about the *ius nuptiarum* between the Marsic leader Poppaedius Silo and Marius during the Social War. On the Marsic élite and marriage, see Letta, *I Marsi*, 141 n. 42.

⁷⁰ Hor. *Epodes* 17. 60 f., 27 ff.; Ovid *AA* 2. 10 ff.

⁷² *Pun.* 8. 495 ff.

⁷³ For explanation of the phrase 'night witch', see n. 45, above, with references to modern literature on the subject.

⁷⁵ Ovid *Fasti* 6. 142 (Alton, Wormell, Courtney); cf. Festus p. 414 L. s.v. *strig* . . . ; Petronius *Sat.* 134; Ovid *Am.* 1. 8; Hor. *AP* 338–40.

⁷⁶ N. Zingarelli, *Vocabolario della lingua italiana* (Bologna, 1983), s.v. *strega*.

⁷⁷ *Fasti* 6. 142 (Alton, Wormell, Courtney); Frazer iv. (1929), 143–4. The reading *nenia Marsa* must surely be preferred to the reading *nenia falsa*, as the phrase *nenia Marsa* occurs in another certain Ovidian context: *AA* 2. 102. This reference is given in the critical apparatus of the Teubner text of the *Fasti*.

Why did the peoples of the Central Apennines have such a reputation for witchcraft, unrivalled in antiquity by any other Italian people? In order to begin to answer this question, it is first necessary to look at the significance of magic and witchcraft within the structures of Greek and Roman thought. First of all, it is important to emphasize that the line between magic and religion, or magic and science, in Roman thought as in more recent periods of history, is culturally determined rather than an objective 'fact'. In general terms, practices which are condemned as magical by Latin writers, members of the Roman élite, are associated with those who are 'not us'. Latin literature provides us with ample evidence to suggest the prevalence of a stereotype of a witch: the witch is most often female, preferably foreign, lewd, drunken, and ugly.⁷⁸ In other words, she fails completely to fit Roman ideals of females safely incorporated into their patriarchal society.⁷⁹

Although such a stereotype exists, it is often a mistake to assume that members of the Roman élite saw anything wrong with the actual practices associated with what was termed witchcraft. The fact that what we might term 'sympathetic magic', activity which occurs in Roman depictions of witches at work, was a regular feature of 'official' Roman cult-practice, is familiar from modern studies of Roman religion.⁸⁰ Again, Pliny the Elder reserves his harshest and most scathing words for the Magi, but the 'medical' practices of which he himself approves often make use of amulets and prepared parts of animals and their excrement, as do their 'magical' practices.⁸¹

It is, then, worth taking a more detailed look at how members of the Roman élite drew the line between practices of which they approved, and 'magical practices'. Magical activity is most often associated with low-life and women, occasionally with parvenus, and, during the Empire, with individuals involved in plots against the life of the emperor or the imperial family. What these groups have in common is the fact that they are marginal as far as power, social and political,

⁷⁸ W. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979), 129.

⁷⁹ Cf. C. Lerner, *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford, 1984), 84 ff. for an interesting discussion of the gender-issues involved in accusations of witchcraft and witch-behaviour.

⁸⁰ e.g. W. Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London, 1911), 49 ff.

⁸¹ *NH* 28, 29, 30, *passim*; cf. Lloyd, *Science*, 140 with n. 76; cf. G. E. R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge, 1979), 13 n. 20; cf. M. Beagon, *Roman Nature: The Thought of Pliny the Elder* (Oxford, 1992), 107.

is concerned.⁸² It is worth recalling here Cicero's list of hawkers of fortunes standing around the circus, a place closely associated with the people of Rome.⁸³ Stereotyped witches appear most frequently within the context of elegiac poetry, where the social status of the mistress is notoriously ambiguous.⁸⁴

'Magical' practices are sometimes scorned by the Roman élite, as is the credulity of those who resort to going to a practitioner.⁸⁵ Such practices should not draw in those whose sex, birth, and good connections bring social and political success without resort to such underhand means. Love-magic is a particularly well-used topos from Theokritos⁸⁶ to Virgil⁸⁷ to the elegiac poets.⁸⁸ With a low-born and desperate young woman as its focus, it is presumably to be considered within the context of the 'Hellenistic' fashion for literature which allowed the reader or hearer a rather titillating 'peep through the key-hole' at spheres of society which they did not usually encounter at close quarters—the female sphere is, not surprisingly, a strong favourite.⁸⁹ Even when the elegiac lover himself resorts to practitioners of love-magic, the speaker—and reader—is safely distanced from the scene, being, presumably, above such things.⁹⁰ Love-magic, quite simply, does not work, says Ovid in his most urbane voice in the *Ars Amatoria*.⁹¹

There is also a history of diatribes against groups of 'medical' practitioners who both overcharge for their recondite services and whose claims are regarded with scepticism by members of the Roman élite. In this category come the Magi with their cures taken from exotic or ill-omened beasts,⁹² or, in the early second century BC, the Greek doctors apparently verbally attacked by Cato the Elder both for their potentially harmful, but fashionable, methods and for the prices which they dared to charge.⁹³ It is against this sort of background that Cato, and, much later, Pliny the Elder extol do-it-yourself

⁸² Cf. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity*, 137 for the idea that the particular situation which is liable to foster magic and accusations of magic is 'when two systems of power clash within one society.'

⁸³ Cic. *De Div.* 1. 132.
⁸⁴ e.g. Tibullus 1. 2. 44 ff., 1. 8. 17 ff.; Propertius 4. 5; for a discussion of the social status of elegiac mistresses, see S. Lilja, *The Roman Elegists' Attitude to Women* (Helsinki, 1965), 40–2.

⁸⁵ e.g. Cic. *De Div.* 1. 132. ⁸⁶ Theokr. *Id.* 2.

⁸⁷ Virg. *Ecl.* 8. 64 ff. ⁸⁸ Tibullus 1. 2. 44 ff.; Propertius 4. 5; Ovid *Am.* 1. 8.

⁸⁹ Cf. Theokr. *Id.* 15; Herodas *Mime* 1. 6.

⁹⁰ e.g. Tibullus 1. 5. 12 ff.; Propertius 1. 1. 19 ff.

⁹¹ Pliny *NH* 28. 92 ff., 29. 66–8, 29. 81 ff.

⁹² Plut. *Car. Mai.* 23; Pliny *NH* 29. 11–14.

⁹¹ AA 2, 101 ff.

cures or cures which can be procured from less exotic sources, such as Cato's cabbage-cures⁹⁴ and the Elder Pliny's pig-fat medicine and sound nutritional advice.⁹⁵ One might well wonder whether these rather unexciting and homely medicines, whatever their physiological effects, had anything like the psychological effects of more exotic remedies.⁹⁶

But it would be a mistake to suppose that condemnations of practices as 'magical' were indicative only of scepticism on the part of an increasingly bookish élite. Roman officials are, on the contrary, frequently found acting on the belief that 'magical' practices are really effective, harmful, and subversive. Famously, the Twelve Tables contain legislation against 'charming away' other people's crops.⁹⁷ Cato advises his gentleman-farmers to prohibit their *vilici* from consulting Chaldaei, presumably because he considered that the results could potentially cause damage to their master.⁹⁸ And while Roman persecution and extermination of Druids and Christians was accompanied by gory tales of the cannibalism and incest of such groups, the belief that they were working against the interests of the Roman people by means of their subversive *superstitiones* was surely not far behind such accusations.⁹⁹ Condemnation of 'magical' activity is built upon fear of power getting into the 'wrong' hands.¹⁰⁰

It is worth considering in some detail what groups of people whose supposed powers are either disapproved of by members of the Roman élite, or from whose activities they distance themselves, have in common. Besides the recurrence of female witches, it is interesting how often foreigners, or foreign rites, appear in this context: the Persian Magi, Egyptians, and Jews are the most reviled and suspected.¹⁰¹ Of course, Roman 'religion' itself had no shortage of foreign cults and rites, such as Etruscan augury and Greek priestesses, let alone the traditional insistence on imports from the Sabine territory during the Regal period, all of which were sponsored by the

⁹⁴ *De Agri Cult.* 156 ff.; cf. Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 23.

⁹⁵ *NH* 28, 123–35.

⁹⁶ Cf. Pliny *NH* 29. 28 for the bitter remark concerning people who consider that no medicine is beneficial unless it is expensive. cf. *NH* 28. 20 for the power of foreign words in spells.

⁹⁷ Pliny *NH* 28. 18; cf. *Twelve Tables* ap. Seneca *QN* 4. 3.

⁹⁸ *De Agri Cult.* 7. 4.

⁹⁹ Cf. G. E. M. De Ste. Croix, 'Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?', *Past and Present* (1963), 6 ff., for the perceived dangers of Christianity to the state.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. J. A. North, 'Diviners and Divination at Rome', in Beard and North (eds.), *Pagan Priests*, 51 ff., 58–60 for the connection between power and access to approved modes of divination.

¹⁰¹ e.g. Pliny *NH* 30. 1–14.

Roman élite. A degree of foreign mystique may go a long way towards encouraging belief in the authority of the powers that be.¹⁰² There were notoriously grey areas between what was considered to be safe and institutionalized foreignness and what was considered to be dangerously and distinctly un-Roman or anti-Roman. Greek culture in particular was very ambiguous indeed. But Persians, Egyptians, and Jews undoubtedly occupied very dangerous ground within Roman thought. It is very interesting in this respect to consider Pliny the Elder's short history of magic. Magic was, he thinks, not only imported into Italy, but also into Greece.¹⁰³ There is surely at times a kind of hierarchy of foreignness in Roman thought: when Greece and Rome are considered alone, Greece may seem foreign enough, and may be attributed all the traits of Eastern decadence. But when ethnic groups on the margins of Greek society itself are brought into the comparison, Greece can seem very much closer to Rome.

As we have seen, Pliny the Elder reserves his most venomous verbal attacks for the claims of the Magi. The reputation of the Magi surely has a lot to do with the fact that Persian culture and religion lay well on the margins of the Hellenized Eastern Mediterranean. Modern anthropological studies suggest that foreign groups, or groups which are in other ways 'marginal' to a particular society, or which directly threaten the society in question, are frequently accused of dangerous magical practice, as a means of making them into scapegoats for all the evils within society, grounds for persecution which are widely considered to be acceptable.¹⁰⁴ In societies where there is not widespread belief in the efficacy of witchcraft and magic, the grounds for condemnation may merely switch to areas which are still considered to be dangerously subversive, such as political views or sexual orientation. For the sake of comparison, Rollin's studies of ancient Assyria suggest that Mesopotamians believed the steppe and the mountains, along with foreign territories whose inhabitants from

¹⁰² Cf. Polyb. 6. 56. 7 for the importance of *δεισιδαιμονία* ('superstition') at Rome. cf. K. V. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971), 274 for the 'magical aura' which the medieval priest could assume in the eyes of an illiterate congregation by virtue of his education and consecration. cf. 151 ff. for the hierarchical nature of the church even after the Reformation.

¹⁰³ *NH* 30. 5. 12.
¹⁰⁴ Cf. Thomas, *Religion*, 561, 'The charges of witchcraft were a means of expressing deep-felt animosities in acceptable guise. Before a witchcraft accusation could be plausibly made, the suspect had to be in a socially or economically inferior position to her supposed victim. Only then could she be presumed to be likely to have had recourse to magical means of retaliation, for, had she been the stronger party, more direct methods of revenge would have been at her disposal.'

time to time invaded the land which the Assyrians had settled, to be inhabited by witches and demons. Foreign women, being doubly outside the control of the observing society, were especially feared as witches. The steppe, the mountains, and these foreign territories all lay mysteriously, and sometimes threateningly, outside the social control of the Assyrians, and this sense of mystery and threat was translated into belief in strange and supernatural powers.¹⁰⁵

In general terms, then, the more foreign a group is considered to be by the society observing it, whether in terms of culture or gender, the more venomous will be accusations of sinister practice. But what, if anything, do such accusations have to go on? In some cases, the group accused is in reality practising an alien religion whose unknown nature leads to imaginative misunderstandings, as in the case of Christianity. The Magi too, according to Herodotus, started off life as religious priests within the Persian Kingdom.¹⁰⁶ Presumably, problems began when they started trading their wares as outsiders in the West. As for women, female biology is clearly alien enough to patriarchal societies, giving rise to a whole range of taboos and magical powers attached to menstruation, virginity, and childbirth.¹⁰⁷ In fact, women, denied power and status in their own right, are often perceived to resort to underhand ways of asserting their own wishes. Within this context come the sinister stereotype of the power behind the throne,¹⁰⁸ and the wife's magical revenge on her husband's mistress described by Pliny the Elder.¹⁰⁹ Somewhat similarly, 'magical' practices may in reality hold more attraction for those who do not have more direct means to achieve power and status within society.

In the case of the Magi in particular, Greek perception of their powers as something strange and fascinating may have helped to encourage them to turn their religious practices into a commercial

¹⁰⁵ S. Rollin, 'Women and Witchcraft in Ancient Assyria', in Cameron and Kuhrt, *Images*, 34 ff., 37.

¹⁰⁶ Herod. 1. 101, 107, 120, 128, 132, 140, 7. 19, 37, 43; cf. Lloyd, *Magic*, 13; cf. Cic. *De Div.* 1. 91: 'nec quisquam rex Persarum potest esse, qui non ante magorum disciplinam scientiamque perceperit.' ('Nor can anyone be king of the Persians, before he has had the training and learned the knowledge of the Magi.')

¹⁰⁷ Pliny *NH* 28. 77-8 for the terrible powers of menstrual blood.

¹⁰⁸ For a discussion of this theme in ancient literature, see Lefkowitz, 'Influential Women', 49 ff.

¹⁰⁹ Pliny *NH* 29. 73: apparently, the trick was to pound up spotted lizards and put them in the offending courtesan's face-cream. If the wife was lucky, the courtesan would come out in an unattractive rash.

venture. For a society's perception of a group as having special powers may lead not just to persecution and the creation of scape-goats, but also to individuals seeking to take advantage of the supposed special powers of the group to which they belong. If the 'foreign' group collaborates and sells their services, as frequently economic necessity constrains them to do, then the observing society's prejudices and stereotypes are only reinforced. The Magi seem to have made a point of capitalizing on their exotic reputation by marketing curses supposedly prepared from parts of the exotic beasts which inhabited the margins of the world according to Greek and Roman imagination.¹¹⁰ There are stories too from modern history of Lapps profiting from their reputation of being magicians by selling bags of wind to European sailors.¹¹¹ In Britain today, Gypsy Lee is a common sight at fairs, while persecution of, and prejudice against, Roma continues.¹¹²

Having considered the role of magic and magicians in general within the structures of Roman thought, it is now time to return to the more specific theme of peoples of the Central Apennines as magicians and witches. I have suggested above that groups which are attributed reputations for witchcraft are very frequently in some sense 'marginal'. While Marsic, Paelignian, and 'Sabellian' witches generally appear in Imperial Latin literature as figures of fun, rather ineffective old women consulted on questions of love, loss, and fortune, it may well be that their unthreatening appearance has to do with the fact that, by the early Empire, these people had long since ceased to be a military threat to Rome. It is worth wondering whether some rather more sinister and threatening images of witchcraft lie behind the amusing figures of early Imperial love-elegy. Such images might have had something in common with the tone of Livy's account of the Third Samnite War, in which the Samnites, in their secret rite, combine the blood of human beings with that of sacrificial beasts.¹¹³ Images of this kind might be seen in the context of Rome's relationship with peoples of the Central Apennines before the Social War and Sulla's activity in Samnium in the 80s BC, when the landscape and social organization of the area might have been perceived to be a dangerous antithesis to Rome's own urban and civilized character. It

¹¹⁰ e.g. Pliny *NH* 29. 66 for the use of basilisk blood.

¹¹¹ Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic*, 32.

¹¹² Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies*, 4. ¹¹³ Livy 10. 38. 5 ff.; cf. 10. 39. 16.

is possible that people from the Central Apennines were then able to profit at Rome from their reputation as witches. It would certainly seem that the idea of them practising their craft for money was a familiar one to the audiences of Horace and Ovid.¹¹⁴

Looking for material evidence of witchcraft in the Central Apennines is not a rewarding business. This is hardly surprising, as few of the activities associated with magic and witchcraft are likely to leave any lasting material traces. 'Religious' activity associated with the élite is obviously far more likely to leave its mark in the form of stone sanctuaries, inscriptions, votive deposits, and the like. With regard to witchcraft, the major exception is curse-tablets, largely associated with urban societies, probably because literacy is a more widely spread phenomenon in such societies. Because of the lack of material evidence for magic and witchcraft, any discussion of its place within a local context must necessarily be more conjectural than the discussion of the cult of Angitia, for example. But it remains a possibility that communities in the Central Apennines produced their own witches, scapegoats that could usefully be blamed when things went wrong. In particular, the *strigae*, old women transformed into birds, supposedly a Marsic speciality, remain tantalizing. In the small communities which were the characteristic form of settlement in the Central Apennines, the range of 'marginal' individuals would not have been anything like as rich as it clearly was in the late Republican/early Imperial city of Rome. All the evils within a small community might be attributed to the nocturnal activities of certain women, or of other 'marginal' characters. Belief in the existence of such beings as *strigae* might well have suited local purposes.

CONCLUSION

Within the structures of Roman thought, religious/supernatural activity amongst the peoples of the Central Apennines is characterized in two distinct ways. On the one hand, amongst Sabines and 'Sabelli' could be found the rustic piety which the city of Rome had, regretably, left behind on her rise to urban greatness. On the other hand, 'Sabelli', Marsi, and Paeligni were associated with snake-charming and witchcraft, sinister and threatening activities. In both cases, the

¹¹⁴ e.g. Hor. *Epodes* 17. 60 f., 27 ff.; Ovid *AA* 2. 10 ff.; Hor. *Sat.* 1. 9. 29–30.

'outsider' quality of peoples of the Central Apennines reflects Roman perception of their relationship with these peoples. The pious Sabines/'Sabelli' represent the safely incorporated Sabines (and, later, the Sabine-Samnites), obviously subordinate to Rome. The sinister snake-charmers and witches are the result of a history of enmity and danger. Within local contexts, some distinctive cult-practice demonstrably had a place, such as the cult of Angitia, but the significance of this cult at a local level appears to have been very different from its significance within the structures of Roman thought. It is important too to note how much is omitted from Roman imagery of religious activity in the Central Apennines. In the previous chapter, I discussed the role of sanctuaries as central places within local society, sponsored by the élites, and with clear signs of wealth and cultural pretension. Where the gods of such sanctuaries can be identified with any degree of certainty, they are not gods which would have been at all unfamiliar to Romans: Hercules, for example, is very frequently found, whether as the god of an ornate sanctuary such as that of Hercules Curinus above Sulmona, or in the form of votive statuettes, found abundantly within the Central Apennines. Such features are not, however, part of Roman imagery of Sabines, 'Sabelli', Paeligni and Marsi. Contrasts rather than echoes were what were required for Roman purposes.

Questions of Identity amongst the Peoples of the Central Apennines

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, 'Roman Contexts', I discussed why, when, and how the Romans began to use the ethnic 'Sabellus' to refer collectively to Sabines and Samnites after the Social War. The coinage of the ethnic 'Sabellus' was not the only means by which Romans grouped various peoples of the Central Apennines together without distinguishing individual tribes: by the Augustan period, these peoples are taken together in the ancient ethnographical tradition, and are said to share certain moral characteristics, such as bravery. This treatment is unique: no other Italian peoples are grouped together in quite this fashion. Belief in collective identities has been important in modern scholarship too: it has, until very recently, been generally argued, and occasionally even taken for granted that the prehistory of Italy can be understood in terms of large unities, such as an 'Italic' community.¹ More specifically, historical collective activity on the part of peoples of the Central Apennines, most notably the Social War, has been explained in terms of the existence of shared 'objective' characteristics, such as a 'Sabellian' or 'Sabellic' character underlying activity in the historical era, apparently maintained without change as an inheritance from a prehistoric community.²

In this present chapter, I shall discuss some of the problems encountered when dealing with questions of identity amongst the peoples of the Central Apennines: in particular, I shall question first the treatment of traditions on the origins of these peoples as descriptions of 'objective' prehistoric groups, and secondly the assumption

¹ e.g. Pallottino, *Earliest Italy*, 3 ff., for the history of ideas of 'Italic' history.

² See e.g. Salmon, *Samnium*, 344; most recently, A. Keaveney, *Rome and the Unification of Italy* (London, 1987), e.g. 11 for explanation of the part played by Venusia in the Social War in terms of its 'Oscanised nature'.

that historical actions and groupings should be understood as simple survivals of prehistoric groups. I shall then suggest that we should look at the social and historical context in which a particular tradition was asserted: rather than explaining the present in terms of the survival of the past, I shall be looking at how the past was constructed according to the needs of the present. I shall aim to show that the diversity of traditions suggests a dynamic process, and that various collective identities tend to be asserted under pressure, in response to circumstances, rather than remaining static and unchanged for hundreds of years.³ This is especially true in the case of the ancient example with which I am concerned here: when we do not have to reckon with a racist ideology assigning permanent pseudo-biological categories, or even with religious categories which are exclusive, the fluidity of self-definition may be all the more marked. As one important example of a 'pressure-point' in the context of which collective identities are asserted, I shall study in detail the allied ideology of the Social War. While the Social War cannot be considered an example of 'ethnic conflict' in a modern sense, as in the situation in Northern Ireland, or the former Yugoslavia, where war is waged explicitly on the grounds of ethnic or religious difference, the ideology of the Social War appealed clearly to collective identities ranged against Rome.⁴

When questions of self-definition are asked within the context of the ancient world, we find that some cultures inevitably provide us with very much more information than do others concerning perceptions of their own ethnic identity, their relationships with other peoples, and their general place in the world. Such cultures, understandably privileged in the treatments of ancient historians, are those which have left behind them a substantial body of literature, such as Late Republican and Imperial Rome, and fifth- to fourth-century Athens. Within the literatures of such cultures are included accounts of peoples outside them, but it would obviously be unreasonable to expect that Athenian or Roman historians were as aware of the

³ Cf. e.g. Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention*; Tonkin *et al.* (eds.), *History and Ethnicity*.

⁴ I follow the definition of ethnicity given by O. Patterson, 'Context and Choice in Ethnic Allegiance: A Theoretical Framework and Caribbean Case-Study', in Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity*, 305 ff., 308: 'we may define ethnicity as follows: that condition wherein certain members of a society, in a given social context, choose to emphasize as their most meaningful basis of primary, extrafamilial identity certain assumed cultural, national, or somatic traits.'

problems of researching and recording information about peoples who did not share their culture as are modern social anthropologists. The way in which peoples are identified in Athenian and Roman literature, and the way in which they would themselves have described their ethnic identity will not necessarily match exactly. Nevertheless, as we have seen in preceding chapters, accounts of 'other peoples' in Hellenistic Italy are rarely complete inventions, but rather 'ways of seeing' through the cultural grid of the society observing them.

Moreover, amongst ancient cultures which do not have a substantial surviving literature of their own, peoples of the Central Apennines are in certain ways more privileged, and more eloquent about questions of identity, than are some. For example, a large number of coins circulated amongst the allies during the Social War advertise notions of collective identity which the allies were clearly expected to share, such as, most commonly, the name *Italia*, written in Latin or in Oscan. Obviously this kind of information is in some ways very much more tantalizing than a literary account, and is likely to be open to even more interpretations than are many literary passages, but at least the existence of such material means that questions are worth asking, and have a specific starting-point. Furthermore, Rome's unusual tendency, when compared with Greek *poleis*, to incorporate peoples first within her army, and later within her citizen body, and within her social and political élite, may at some points mean that we are given comparatively substantial information about what Italian peoples thought about themselves, and how they defined their actions, in contrast with peoples conquered or encountered by Athenians. After all, to some extent, the history of the Samnites or Marsi was to become the history of Rome from the Late Republic onwards, with profound consequences for the construction of the past.

In later sections of this chapter, I shall examine closely ways in which peoples of the Central Apennines expressed their ethnic identity, concentrating on their use of collective names and symbols, and on myths of origins and interconnections which can be argued to have been important to the peoples themselves in their own self-assertion. Before doing this, however, it is necessary to examine and criticize other ways in which ancient and modern scholars have sought to categorize peoples of the Central Apennines.

1. ANCIENT AND MODERN CATEGORIES

(a) *Ancient Ethnography and the Central Apennines*

Once upon a time when the Latins, the Umbrians, the Ausonians and many others were all called Tyrrhenians by the Greeks, because they were remote places, and therefore knowledge of them was imprecise . . . (Dionysius of Halicarnassus)⁵

Despite the fact that ancient authors at times show awareness of the inadequacy of the information available to them, in modern scholarship, appeal is still frequently made to ancient theories of the prehistoric, primitive unity of peoples of the Central Apennines. This use of ancient ethnography and myth may be used to interpret prehistoric archaeological data, or to strengthen claims that a sense of ethnic unity was important during the Social War. In the latter case, the implication, put bluntly, is that, if the peoples of the Central Apennines 'really' had a common origin, then such a sense of a common origin would—more or less automatically—condition behaviour in historical times. I will investigate this particular assumption in more detail below. For the moment, however, it is clear that it is worth beginning by examining ancient ethnographical sources, and asking how valid it is to build modern theories on this kind of evidence.

As we have seen, an addition to the end of Hesiod's *Theogony* constitutes some of the earliest written evidence for Greek mythological genealogies for Italian peoples.⁶ In this passage, Circe and Odysseus are said to have produced Latinus and Agrios, kings of the Tyrrhenians. This trio is very interesting: while Tyrrhenians and Latinus obviously stand for historically known peoples (the Etruscans and the Latins), Agrios presumably refers to any other non-Greek peoples of Italy.⁷ But we know of no Italian peoples who ever called themselves Agrioi: Agrios is surely a coinage based on the Greek adjective: nothing more than wildness and savagery personified.⁸ This

⁵ D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 29. 2.

⁶ Hesiod, *Theog.* 1011–18.

⁷ Torelli, 'Le popolazioni dell'Italia antica', 56–7, for discussion of Agrios, and of Greek images of Italian peoples in general.

⁸ West, *Hesiod. Theogony*, 433, does not allow for the possibility that the Hesiodic Agrios is related to other Agrioi, and is therefore not specific to Italy, but a generic Wild Man. To argue, as he does, that a relationship between the Italian Agrios and e.g. the Thracian Agrianes could only occur if the author were in an improbable state of 'enormous confusion' is to underestimate the fogginess of the ancient notion of the margins of the world.

likelihood is increased when one realizes that there were other sets of *agrioi* in Greek thought, two of which supposedly lived in Thrace and Ethiopia, suitably savage locations right out on the periphery of the known world in classical times.⁹ These Italian *agrioi* are surely also figments of the Greek imagination, belonging to the days of early Greek colonization, when Greeks had little interest in large tracts of Italy, and particularly inland, mountainous Italy, which would initially have been comparatively remote from the Greek colonies of the coast, and which had few material resources of obvious value to exchange for precious Greek artefacts.¹⁰ Etruscans and Latins are, then, 'on the map', while the whole of the rest of Italy is uncertain and uncivilized.

While the case of *Agrios* may be easily explained, ancient authors also people central Italy with names that are not as etymologically transparent, but which are none the less never attested as names by which peoples ever called themselves. There is, for example, the case of the Opici/Obsci/Osci (the names are apparently entirely interchangeable).¹¹ They are believed to be a prehistoric people, and are first mentioned by Thucydides. He does not give any precise indication of what he imagines their territory to be, but merely attributes to them the role of driving the Sicels out of Italy in remote prehistory.¹² Elsewhere, they are said to inhabit Campania before the arrival of the Etruscans, and Samnium before the arrival of the Samnite division of the Sabine Sacred Spring.¹³ The supposed occupation of such a vast territory by a single tribe back in the mists of time before the Trojan War and the arrival of civilization in Italy is incredible.¹⁴ The fact that the Opici/Obsci/Osci are also believed to have inhabited all the areas

⁹ For Ethiopian *Agrioi*, see Strabo 16. 4. 10 = 771 C; for Thracian *Agriai* or *Agrianes*, see Steph. Byz. s.v.; Polyb. 18. 5. 8. For ancient notions of what went on at the edge of the known world, see Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 47–50; J. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, 1992).

¹⁰ Torelli, 'Le popolazioni dell'Italia antica', 56–7, for the relationship between economic advancement amongst Italian peoples and ethnographic precision in Greek literature.

¹¹ For the argument that Opici and Osci are falsely distinguished by Strabo, see Frederiksen, *Campania*, 149–50 n. 16.

¹² 6. 2. 4.
¹³ Campania/western Italy: Ar. *Pol.* 1329^b19, 'Opikoi'; Strabo 5. 3. 6 = 232 C, 'Osci'. Samnium: Strabo 5. 4. 3 = 242 C, 'Opikoi'.

¹⁴ For the sake of comparison, the emergence of the so-called 'super-tribes' in Africa must be understood within a specific, and complex social context of migration and urbanization, which contributed to the widening of ethnic identities: M. M. Gordon, 'Towards a General Theory of Racial and Ethnic Group Relations', in Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity*, 84 ff., 126.

occupied by peoples referred to as 'Samnites' in ancient literary sources, and speaking dialects classified by the ancients and by modern scholars alike as 'Oscan'¹⁵ should also make us suspicious. The Opici/Obsci/Osci are surely no more than a projection back into prehistory of the observed situation in southern Italy after the fifth century occupation of Campania and the South by Oscan-speaking peoples.

Historical names of peoples of the Central Apennines also crop up in the accounts of the Greek geographers. As many of these passages are hardly less problematic than ancient accounts of prehistoric peoples and their migrations, it is worth dealing with these here, too. In later Greek accounts, such as those of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Strabo in the Augustan period, individual tribes, and even some entirely inland peoples, such as the Marsi,¹⁶ are named, and Strabo also mentions some settlements which he thinks may be called cities amongst these peoples.¹⁷ Dionysius is interested mainly in contrasting the barbaric tribes of central and southern Italy with their conquerors, the civilized Romans of Greek descent.¹⁸ Strabo is rather more generous to the peoples of the Central Apennines, although his account of them obviously does not compare well with his detailed accounts of the Greek cities of the south. It is clear that he has absorbed Roman ideology concerning the moral and military prowess of the peoples of the Central Apennines, and the fact that he locates the various tribes along (Roman) roads may indicate that he has even made some use of specifically Roman geographical source-material in this section:¹⁹ after all, the Romans had more of a vested interest than the Greeks ever did in having a clear idea of the individual territories

¹⁵ R. Coleman, 'The Central Italian Languages in the Period of Roman Expansion', *TCPs* (1986), 100 ff., for the actual complexity involved in classifying central Italic languages and the relationships between them. The possible relevance to questions of 'Oscan' identity of Osca in Spain is open to dispute: Salmon, *Samnium*, 319 n. 2.

¹⁶ Marsi: Strabo 5. 3. 9 = 237 C; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 89.

¹⁷ Strabo 5. 4. 2 = 241 C for cities amongst the Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, and Frentani. Strabo 5. 3. 1 = 228 C for the few remaining cities amongst the Sabines. Strabo 5. 4. 11 = 249-50 C for Samnite villages which were once cities.

¹⁸ D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 89 for Rome as a Greek city, in contrast with the barbarous hordes of Opici, Marsi, Samnites, Tyrrhenians, Bruttians, Umbrians, Ligurians, Iberians, and Gauls incorporated into her citizenship.

¹⁹ Strabo 5. 4. 2 = 241 C for the bravery of Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, and Frentani. For the location of tribes along Roman roads, see e.g. 5. 3. 11 = 238 C for the Via Valeria.

of their various tribes.²⁰ Strabo's account of the Samnites is comparatively detailed, in contrast with his treatment of other tribes of the Central Apennines such as the Marsi: his is the longest account we have of the original Sacred Spring in which the Sabines/Samnites arrive in Samnium, and he also has some ethnographical material which does not appear elsewhere.²¹ He clearly had access to accounts which were sympathetic towards the Samnites: as a result of their dealings between Tarentum and the Samnites in the second half of the fourth century BC, the Greek world had had occasion to take a keen interest in Samnites.²²

Earlier geographers give us a very much less detailed picture of central and southern Italy than do either Dionysius or Strabo. Of fourth-century geographers, Philistus of Syracuse apparently wrote that 'Samnites' inhabited Tyrseta and Mystia.²³ The former settlement cannot be identified, while the latter is said by the Elder Pliny to be in Bruttium.²⁴ Pseudo-Scylax wrote that 'Daunitai' occupied a broad band of territory between the Tyrrhenian and the Adriatic Seas: the text is conventionally emended to 'Saunitai'.²⁵ On Salmon's calculation of the length of coast occupied by these Saunitai/Daunitai, indicated by Pseudo-Scylax as the length of time it takes to sail past them on either coast, they would occupy *at least* the territories of the following historical tribes: Picentini, Pentri, Fren-tani, Paeligni, Marrucini, Marsi, Vestini.²⁶ In the fourth century other candidates were also favoured for the occupation of central eastern Italy: according to Eudoxus of Cnidus, the territory between the *Ombrioi* and

²⁰ See D. Musti, 'La nozione storica dei Sanniti nelle fonti greche e romane', in *Sannio* (1984), 71 ff., for an interesting discussion of the related theme of the differences between Greek and Roman accounts of Samnite tribes. The ideological importance of the Roman 'divide and conquer' mentality which surely lies behind Roman geographical precision is usefully discussed by Salmon, *Samnium*, 46–8.

²¹ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C for the Sacred Spring, Pitanates amongst the Samnites, and Samnite wedding customs.

²³ Philistus ap. Steph. Byz. s.vv. 'Mystia', 'Tyrseta'.

²² Cf. Ch. 1, s. 3 above.
²⁴ NH 3. 95.

²⁵ *Periplus* 11. 15. The text as it stands reads *Daunitai* rather than *Saunitai*, and this point is much discussed. Although Salmon, *Samnium*, 40 n. 4 is eager to emend the text, Musti, 'La nozione storica', 78, suggests that the reading *Daunitai* should be preserved, and that the author is evoking an affinity between the Samnites and the Daunian world, to the advantage of the Samnites.

²⁶ Salmon, *Samnium*, 40; but see his note of uncertainty in nn. 5 and 6 on the same page.

Iapygia was occupied by *Phelessaioi*,²⁷ an ethnic which might conceivably be a corrupt form of the name of an historical people,²⁸ if it is not entirely his own invention.

Three distinct phases may be identified within these early Greek accounts of the peoples of the Central Apennines. These phases surely reflect primarily the level of Greek interest in these peoples, and cannot legitimately be used as the starting-point for a study of the ethnic identity of the peoples themselves. At the first stage, represented by the name *Agrios*, the level of interest seems very low indeed: Italy is inhabited by Latins and Tyrrhenians, and an amorphous mass of Wild Men. At the second stage, represented by the name *Opikos*, some attempt has been made at coining an ethnic to describe a group which is perceived to share common characteristics, such as language. While these *Opikoi* indicate a clear interest in the re-creation of the prehistory of the non-Greek peoples of central and southern Italy amongst the Greek world, they seem too obviously a projection back of the perceived contemporary situation to be of any use at all in the reconstruction of actual prehistoric ethnic identity. The first appearances of more precise names for the peoples of central eastern Italy in the fourth century BC are unlikely to be accidental. For one thing, the Samnites were of obvious political and military importance to both Greeks in the later fourth century BC and Romans during the Samnite Wars of the fourth to third centuries BC. For another thing, it seems that Syracusans first established the colony of Ancona on the coast of Picenum at some point during the first few decades of the fourth century.²⁹ With established colonies in the Adriatic, Greeks are likely to have had very much more direct dealings with central eastern Italians than ever before.³⁰ Obviously, difficulties remain with material of this period: for one thing, authors do not agree about the names they attribute; for another thing, Greek

²⁷ Eudoxus of Cnidus, *Periplus* F 319: Φελεσσαῖοι ἔθνος ὁμορον τοῖς Ὀμβρικοῖς πρὸς τῇ Ἰαπυγίᾳ, ὡς Εὐδοξὸς ἔκρη ('The Phelessaioi. A people neighbouring the Ombrioi close to Iapygia, as Eudoxus says in his sixth book').

²⁸ Van Wousterghem, *Superaequum, Corfinium, Sulmo*, 23 identifies Paeligni with Phelessaioi; this identification is clearly not certain: Faliscans or 'Pelasgians' are at least as likely candidates.

²⁹ For the establishment of Ancona, see Strabo 5. 4. 2 = 241 C.

³⁰ The importance of Tarentum in the spread of Greek culture in eastern Italy should probably not, however, be underestimated even in the case of tribes further to the north, such as Paeligni and Marsi. See Letta, *I Marsi*, 69, for discussion of Ve. 224, [i]ouies. pucle[s] = ioviis pueris, as evidence of the diffusion of a specifically Tarentine, rather than Roman, version of the Dioscuri cult.

authors may use a historical ethnic which was actually used by people to describe themselves, such as 'Samnite', to describe people who did not refer to themselves in this way. Parallels may be seen in the modern Anglo-American use of terms such as 'Chinese'.³¹ Where other evidence is lacking, it will have to remain a possibility that it is precisely this phenomenon which we can observe in the case of these Greek geographers. I will, however, argue below that it is entirely possible that the name 'Samnite' had a geographically extensive sense within a fourth-century context.

(b) *Myths of Origin*

A subgroup within ancient ethnographical treatments is an account of the origins of a people, generally in the Mediterranean world set within the tradition of wandering heroes, particularly in the aftermath of the Trojan War. Accounts of the origins of peoples of the Central Apennines given within Greek and Latin literature are comparatively numerous and varied. The majority of accounts are given by authors of the Late Republican period, although some fragments of Cato's *Origines* and of Gnaeus Gellius are also concerned with accounts of origins of peoples of the Central Apennines.³² Within this chapter, as elsewhere in this book, close analysis of particular accounts will take into account questions about specific authors, and the social and cultural context within which they were writing, although it is well worth noting here that there is no observable pattern of preference for particular kinds of myth on the basis of the times when these authors were writing. This is perhaps not surprising when one takes into account the prevalently antiquarian nature of this material. In the course of this chapter, I shall suggest plausible ideological contexts for the assertion of individual myths of origins. For the moment, however, I shall take a synchronic view of myths of origins, to emphasize their variety.

One group of accounts of the origins of peoples of the Central Apennines is very much within the tradition of foundations by individual wandering heroes. Thus, for example, according to a version found in Servius' commentary on the *Aeneid*, various Sam-

³¹ For interesting examples of this phenomenon in north-west Ontario, Canada, see Banton, *Racial Consciousness*, 3.

³² Cato *Orig.* 2. 21-3 (Chass.); Cn. Gell. fr. 8 P. = Pliny *NH* 3. 108; fr. 9 P. = Solin. 2. 28; fr. 10 P. = Servius *Ad Verg. Aen.* 8. 638.

nite towns were founded by Diomedes.³³ Festus has a version of the origins of the Paeligni within which their forefather, Volsimius, came from Illyricum; his grandson Pelicus became the eponymous ancestor of the Paeligni,³⁴ very much within the tradition of Hellenistic taste for etymologies of this kind. Then again, there is a group of traditions linking peoples of the Central Apennines up with Sparta, which I have discussed within the context of Samnite-Tarentine ideology of the later fourth century bc. Thus, according to Strabo, 'some say' that the Samnites were joined by Laconian colonists, and that some Samnites were actually called Pitantes.³⁵ Servius' version, whereby the Samnites are descended from Persians, is surely based on the same kind of idea, Persians being originally austere, before their corruption by the possession and enjoyment of empire.³⁶ As we have also seen, Cato apparently had a story whereby the Sabines were descended from Lacedaemonian Sabus.³⁷

Another group of myths locates the origins of peoples of the Central Apennines within Italy. Thus, Cato's alternative version of Sabine origins has them descended from Sabinus, son of Sancus, otherwise known as Dius Fidius. While this version might have had for Cato special overtones of Sabine piety, one might compare the 'indigenous' version of the origins of Rome, which of course involves the fatherhood of Mars.³⁸ Other myths interestingly emphasize connections between the origins of various peoples of the Central Apennines. Thus, for example, Cato has a version of the naming of the Marrucini, whereby they will take their name from either *Marsus* or *Paelignus*: the Marsic individual or the Paelignian individual—or even, perhaps, an eponymous 'Marsus' or 'Paelignus', depending on who kills an enemy first:

Marsus hostem occidit prius quam Paelignus, propterea Marrucini vocantur, de Marso detorsum nomen.

Marsus killed his enemy before Paelignus, and on this account the Marrucini are so called, their name a corruption of Marsus.³⁹

³³ Servius *Ad Verg. Aen.* 8. 9. ³⁴ Festus p. 248 L. s.v. Peligni.

³⁵ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C; cf. Ch. 1, s. 3 above.

³⁶ Servius *Ad Verg. Aen.* 8. 638; cf. Herod. 9. 122, 1. 71; Plato *Laws* 695a; Arrian *An.* 5. 4. 5.

³⁷ Cato *Orig.* 2. 22 = Cn. Gell. fr. 10 P. = Servius *Ad Verg. Aen.* 8. 638; cf. Ch. 2, s. 4 above.

³⁸ Cato *Orig.* 2. 21 (Chass.) = D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 2. 49. 2; cf. Ch. 2, s. 5 above.

³⁹ Cato *Orig.* 2. 23 = Priscianus *Gramm.* 9, pp. 487 ff.

Finally, there is the myth of the Sacred Spring, or, rather, the myths of the Sacred Springs, as there are a number of different versions, involving different peoples. These 'Sacred Springs' are quite unlike Sacred Springs within the Roman tradition, a ritual dedication in times of crisis of fruits and animals born one spring.⁴⁰ 'Sacred Springs' reputedly sent out by Sabines and Samnites involve men, sent out in expeditions, sometimes led by an animal. 'Sacred Springs' of this kind become, therefore, accounts of origins of a distinctive kind, involving neither wandering heroes, nor even named eponymous heroes of any kind. One of the fullest versions is found in Strabo, when he is discussing various versions of Samnite origins:

The Sabini, since they had been fighting the Ombrioi for a long time, vowed, just as some of the Greeks do, to dedicate everything produced that year, and when they had had their victory, they sacrificed some of the things produced, and dedicated the rest; but when a famine followed, someone said that they should have dedicated the children as well. So they did this, and dedicated to Ares the children born that year, and when they grew up, they sent them off as colonists, and a bull led their way; when the bull lay down in the land of the Opikoi (who happened to be living in villages), they [the Sabini] threw them out and settled there, and sacrificed the bull to Ares who had given him as a guide, on the instructions of the prophets. It is reasonable on this account that their name 'Sabelli' should be explained as a diminutive form of their ancestors' name, while the Samnites, whom the Greeks call Saunitai, are so-called for a different reason.⁴¹

The origin of the Picentes is also attributed by Strabo to a Sacred Spring sent out by the Sabines. The Picentes followed, very suitably, a *picus*, or woodpecker. This version is found also in Pliny the Elder.⁴² Strabo also gives to the Hirpini an animal leader, a wolf, or '*hirpus*', as the Samnites call a wolf'.⁴³ In the *Fasti*, Ovid attributes Sabine origins to the Paeligni, and says that the Sabines and Paeligni together consider the fourth month of the year to be that of Mars: he does not mention directly a Sacred Spring or an animal leader.⁴⁴ In Festus, who claims to be using an account by Alfius, in the first book of his Carthaginian War, the Mamertini too are attributed origins in a Sacred Spring sent out by the Samnites. This is a highly interesting version, as Apollo has partially displaced Mars/Ares as the god

⁴⁰ Salmon, *Samnium*, 35.

⁴¹ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C. Loeb translation, with adaptations.

⁴² Ibid. 5. 4. 2 = 240 C; cf. Pliny *NH* 3. 110.

⁴⁴ *Fasti* 3. 95-6.

⁴³ 5. 4. 12 = 250 C.

associated with the Sacred Spring, and as there are other motifs, such as the plague, which strongly suggest a version heavily influenced by ideology of Greek cities of southern Italy:

The Mamertini are so-called for this reason: when a serious plague fell on the whole of Samnium, Sthenius Mettius, the leader of the Samnite people, called a meeting of the people, and explained that he had dreamed of Apollo, who advised him that, if they wanted to be rid of this plague, they should dedicate a Sacred Spring, that is, that they should offer to him whatever was born in the next spring; they did this and were relieved, but then after the twentieth year a plague of the same kind struck them again. Once again, Apollo was consulted and made his reply, saying that their vow had not been completed, because the men had not been offered: if they drove them out, then certainly they would be free of this calamity. So those who were ordered to do so left their homeland, and, when they had settled in the part of Sicily which is now called Tauricana, they came without being asked to the aid of the Messanians, who happened to be hard pressed in the early stages of a war, and thereby freed the people of that place: in return for this service, to repay them, the Messanians invited them into their citizen-body, and to share land in common with them, and together they took on a single name, so that they were called Mamertini, because when they had put into their lottery the names of the twelve gods, Mamers was the name that chanced to fall out: this is the name for Mars in the language of the Osci. Alfius is the author of this story in the first book of his Carthaginian War.⁴⁵

These, then, are the different types of myths of origins concerning peoples of the Central Apennines. For many, a reasonable case can be made that they represent local self-definition, as well as playing their part within Greek and Roman perceptions of them. Before moving on to discuss modern treatments of origins and prehistory, I would want once again to emphasize the diversity of these myths, as well as their complexity, often forgotten in modern treatments, when one myth is selected out and chosen as a description of a factual occurrence.

2. MODERN CATEGORIES

An archaeological culture is not a racial group, nor a historical tribe, nor a linguistic unit, it is simply an archaeological culture.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Festus p. 150 L. s.v. Mamertini.

⁴⁶ D. L. Clarke, *Analytical Archaeology* (London, 1968), 13.

Modern scholars do not now use categories such as *agrioi* or Aborigines to describe prehistoric peoples of Italy, nor is it felt to be valid to write about the culture of the Opici, although Salmon is still content to make judgements about the probability that 'the language of the Opici resembled that of the Samnites, and that they were an earlier group of related immigrants who had made their way into southern Italy'.⁴⁷ Most recently, however, archaeologists' and philologists' names for culture- and language-systems respectively have supplanted Opici and the like. These names are often in themselves less loaded with ethnic implications than were the names used in ancient times, although, as we shall see, these too can assume ethnic connotations in the hands of modern scholars.⁴⁸ Most successful of all are names which are used to describe cultures with defined time-spans, but which suggest primarily simply geographical position, such as 'Apenninic' or 'Central Adriatic'. More questionable are the pseudo-scientific names which are based—and rather broadly at that—on ancient names, such as 'Protosabellic'. Such names are methodologically dubious, and far too suggestive of specific ethnic identities which are not justified. 'Protosabellic' is doubly dubious, as it is based on an ethnic—*Sabellus*—which is likely to have been a comparatively late Roman invention.⁴⁹

The real problem is that even very recent modern literature is full of assumptions that culture- or language-systems may simply be equated with tribal groups or broader ethnic affinities. A popular theme in modern archaeological and linguistic accounts of the prehistory and history of the Central Apennines is that of invasion. When culture or language changes in this area—or when it is believed to change—this phenomenon is assumed to signify a change in personnel, with, in rather more sophisticated accounts of this kind, the original inhabitants remaining in the area, but within a very much less active substratum.⁵⁰ Different

⁴⁷ Salmon, *Samnium*, 29.

⁴⁸ For criticism of this tendency, see D. Ridgway, 'Italy from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age', in *CAH*(2) iv. (1988), 623 ff., 641.

⁴⁹ See Salmon, *Samnium*, 33 for very stretched usage of *Sabellus* and insistence on using the modern coinages 'Sabellic' and 'Sabellian', despite awareness that this is 'not demonstrably in conformity with ancient usage'. The fact that the practice of extending the sense of *Sabellus* and its modern variations beyond ancient usage, in which it is restricted to Sabines and Samnites 'has in fact become so widespread as to be normal' (33) is not an argument for continuing to use it thus.

⁵⁰ See e.g. Ridgway, 'Italy from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age', 623 ff. for criticism of the application of invasion hypotheses to Villanovan and Etruscan cultures.

'waves' are favoured according to the culture- or language-system in which various scholars are interested, or according to which culture- or language-system is in vogue at the time, but the tendency remains strikingly similar, and is, at times, analogous to the world-view of the ancients. Some modern scholars are more explicit in their recognition of this similarity than are others, and will take ancient myths as the starting-point for their interpretation of the archaeological or linguistic record.

Some examples are needed. A number of the oldest modern reconstructions are based on a notion of the arrival of Indo-Europeans in Italy, a process which can include the maintenance of a pre-Indo-European substratum.⁵¹ Such reconstructions are often based on the linguistic study of place-names, a kind of study which can be hazardous.⁵² But trouble really begins when the rather abstract—and potentially helpful—notion of Indo-European is subtly transformed into a more or less defined group of people called Indo-Europeans, who originated in a certain zone. When this happens, we basically have something very similar to the ideas of the primitive ethnic unities which were familiar in ancient thought, some coming with their own eponymous founders, or at least named leaders from overseas, and others consisting of amorphous tribes filling in the gaps between such honoured groups.⁵³

Invasion theories have also been very closely related to culture-systems identified more recently than Indo-European. These more tangible culture- or language-systems have been frequently linked up with the Sacred Spring myths concerning the origins of central Italian peoples such as Picentes, Samnites, and Paeligni, and certainly the Strabonian version of the origins of the Samnites is a model for their interpretation in these modern accounts: a succession of personnel, from the prehistoric and amorphous Opici to the named, historical tribes of this region, is the pivotal point in these interpretations.

Amongst cultures identified more recently is the 'Central Adriatic'

⁵¹ See e.g. Salmon, *Sannium*, 34, for the idea of 'persistent infiltration by groups of Indo-European-speaking pastoral warrior nomads who already in the prehistoric period had mingled, no doubt violently, with the 'aboriginals' into whose midst they had penetrated'. Cf. J. P. Mallory, *In Search of the Indo-Europeans* (London, 1989), especially ch. 8, pp. 222 ff., 'Indo-European Expansions'.

⁵² See D. Silvestri, 'Identificazione e interpretazione linguistiche di etnici e toponimi dell'Italia antica', *AION(Ling.)* 4 (1982), 65 ff., 70, for useful remarks on the difficulties associated with attempts to distinguish between Indo-European and non-Indo-European.

⁵³ Pallottino, *Earliest Italy*, 25–33 for a summary and criticism of this approach.

archaeological culture. This rich culture, fine examples of which can be seen in the Museo Nazionale di Antichità in Chieti, is characterized by inhumation in tombs, sometimes in stone circles, with grave-goods consisting of arms, vases, bronze and amber ornaments and geometric figurines: a culture that shows abundant signs of interaction with Greek, Etruscan, and other Mediterranean cultures.⁵⁴ This archaeological culture has been identified over quite a large area of eastern Italy (on the coast alone, from Ancona to Pescara, and possibly some way beyond), over several centuries, peaking in the sixth century BC. Contacts with other parts of the Mediterranean apparently start to diminish during the course of the sixth century.⁵⁵ According to Cianfarani, who made an extensive and highly influential study of Central Adriatic culture, a 'Sabellic' element arrived in the Central Adriatic world during the course of the sixth century BC. This is argued on the basis of an apparent 'fall off' in material culture and Mediterranean connections in the area at around this time.⁵⁶ Even before the archaeological data is examined more closely, and other reasons are put forward to account for any such 'fall off', this theory immediately begs questions about how it is possible to account for a specific phenomenon of cultural change by referring to the lack of cultural sophistication of an 'element' about which we know nothing before its sixth century 'arrival' in this area. Appeal is presumably being made here to ideas of the rough and ready Samnites who are familiar to us from Latin literature, but it is hardly sound methodology to use ideologically-laden texts from the first century BC⁵⁷ to interpret archaic archaeological data. In Cianfarani's account, the Sacred Spring myths concerning central Italian peoples dramatize the arrival of this 'Sabellian' element.⁵⁸

Perhaps the least helpful application of the Sacred Spring myths to

⁵⁴ Cianfarani, *Culture adriatiche*.

⁵⁵ Pallottino, *Genti e culture dell'Italia preromana* (Rome, 1981), 88–9.

⁵⁶ Cianfarani, *Culture adriatiche*, 61, 'Superati gli anni difficili, nessuna circostanza locale valse qui a suscitare quella ripresa della quale, sia pure in un mutato clima culturale, fruirono le Marche, sicché le tribù sabelliche ebbero agio di imporre definitivamente agli indigeni la rudezza dei loro costumi montanari' ('When the difficult years were over, no local condition was enough to bring about a revival of what the Marche enjoyed, whether simply because of a changed cultural climate, or rather because the Sabellic tribes now had the opportunity to bring in definitively to the indigenous peoples the rough-and-ready nature of their mountain ways.')

⁵⁷ See e.g. Livy 9. 13. 7; cf. Salmon, *Samnium*, 50 ff., for reconstruction of Samnite society on the basis of passages such as this.

⁵⁸ Cianfarani, *Culture adriatiche*, 55 ff.

archaeological evidence is that of Grossi, who interprets archaeological data in the Marsic region by reference to the arrival here of an 'Umbro-Sabellic' element in a Sacred Spring, supplanting an earlier population. Now, for a start, there is nothing in ancient literature to suggest that the Marsi were traditionally one of the peoples sent out by the Sabines in a Sacred Spring. It has been argued that their name is based on the name Mars, and that, as Mars is the god to whom Sacred Springs are originally dedicated, then the Marsi must, like other tribes, have had a place in this myth.⁵⁹ This argument is questionable, and it has to be emphasized that there is no sign of this version even in the literature of the early Imperial period, when there is a substantial level of interest in the Italian 'heritage' of Rome. Grossi, however, goes on to look for signs of the arrival of 'migrated' elements within his chosen archaeological landscape. This investigation is remarkably unsuccessful, but Grossi continues to assert that the arrival of 'Umbro-Sabellic' groups in the Fucine area 'must have' brought with them innovations; unfortunately, we do not know what they were. He is reduced to pointing to myths localized in the Marsic area which refer to, for example, the lost city of Archippe, which surely cannot by themselves be interpreted as certain evidence for a lost civilization later supplanted by new arrivals.⁶⁰

It is, however, in accounts based largely or exclusively on linguistic and textual data that some of the most sweeping conclusions about ethnic identity are found. Most recently of all, and, as we shall see, very misleadingly, there has been talk of a 'Safin- culture', which has also been linked up with Sacred Spring myths.⁶¹ This 'Safin- culture' (or even, in some modern accounts, 'Safin- community'⁶² has been based largely on the discovery of written texts dating mainly (but not exclusively) to the sixth to fifth centuries BC within eastern Italy,

⁵⁹ Letta, *I Marsi*, 26 asserts: 'innanzi tutto recorderemo il nome stesso dei Marsi, derivato con certezza dal nome di Marte, il dio di ogni *ver sacrum*' ('above all we shall recall the very name of the Marsi, derived with certainty from the name of Mars, the god of each *ver sacrum*'). If this is so certain, it seems rather strange that no ancient source that we have makes the connection, although the connection with Marsyas is made frequently.

⁶⁰ G. Grossi, *Il territorio del Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo dell'antichità* (Civitella Alfedena, 1988), 124-5.

⁶¹ I use the form 'safin-' throughout, because we have no surviving example of the use of this ethnic in the nominative. The nominative plural would probably have been **safineis*.

⁶² Grossi, *Il territorio*, 65 ff., 'Il territorio del parco nel quadro della civiltà safina X-IV a.C.'

found within the area of historical southern Picenum, as well as in the historical territories of the Vestini, Paeligni, and Marrucini. The language of these texts is conventionally referred to as 'south Picene', and the areas where texts have been found correspond broadly with the areas covered by Central Adriatic culture. Affinities have also been argued to exist between the language of these texts and that of texts discovered in the Sabine and Campanian areas.⁶³

Most recently, and most suggestively of all, Morandi, and, with rather greater caution, Marinetti, have sought to establish links between South Picene texts and the text of the 'Cures pillar', discovered in a river-bed to the north of the ancient site of Cures by Giorgio Filippi in April 1982, and still very largely undeciphered (and, it should be admitted, largely illegible as well). Morandi, who published the text of the Cures *cippus* in 1983, came to some rather hasty conclusions about its linguistic context, and, indeed, about relationships between South Picene texts in general. He suggested that the alphabet and language of the Cures *cippus* and South Picene texts were 'absolutely identical', an over-confident conclusion to make about an inscription which has been so badly eroded by water. He also suggested the importance of links between the South Picene texts and the archaic text from Poggio Sommavilla in the Tiber Valley, suggesting the existence of a common language shared by peoples 'from the Tiber to the shores of the Adriatic'. Nor, in fact, did he stop at the Tiber. Having pointed to links also between the Cures inscription and archaic (i.e. pre-Oscan) texts from Campanian Nocera Inferior and Vico Equense, he concluded by making assertions about the 'common stock' of the peoples of all areas linked in his argument, and about their 'remote cultural unity'. Morandi's interest in inscriptions from the historical area of Campania is directed towards 'proving' the tradition of Sabine involvement in the early history of Rome: his argument is, presumably, that, if one can find Sabines in Campania, then they must have gone via Rome to get there; this is hardly satisfactory.⁶⁴ Morandi's conclusion brings him close to ancient beliefs about the existence of the Opici in their most extensive manifestation, stretching from the Tyrrhenian to the Adriatic.

⁶³ For detailed discussion of this subject, see e.g. A. Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno come italico: nota preliminare', *St. Etr.* 49 (1981), 113 ff.; A. Morandi, 'Iscrizione sabina arcaica nel territorio di Cures', *St. Etr.* 51 (1983), 595 ff.; Prosdocimi, 'La lingua', 'I safini', 'Sabinità'; Cristofani Martelli, 'Poggio Sommavilla'.

⁶⁴ Morandi, 'Iscrizione sabina arcaica'.

The 'Safin-' label used by other scholars to refer to a territory as extensive as that described by Morandi is derived from a sub-group of South Picene texts concentrated exclusively around Penna Sant'Andrea (a site located near the modern Abruzzese town of Teramo, within the area of southern Picenum in Roman times) which contain the word *safin-* in formulas translated as 'the Safin- people', and 'leading men of the Safin-', which have, not unreasonably, led to its interpretation as an ethnic.⁶⁵ The strong possibility of connections between the south Picene *safin-*, the historical people known in Latin as Sabini, and the Oscan reference to *safinim* in a mid-second century BC inscription from Temple A in Pietrabbondante (in the territory of the Pentrian Samnites in historical times), has caused great excitement amongst modern scholars.⁶⁶

Excitement about these new discoveries is certainly justified, but the problems associated with interpreting this new data are formidable. I will discuss them in detail in the next section, paying particular attention to problems of identifying Sabini, Samnites, and *safin-*, but, for the moment, it is worth pointing to some of the dangers associated with the application of the 'Safin-' label in modern scholarship. Too often, this material has been taken as 'proof' of the Sacred Spring myths. It is interesting that, in fact, a variety of phenomena are taken as 'proof' of these myths, emphasizing in fact that these myths are more complex and more open-ended than one might assume from the individual accounts of certain archaeologists and philologists.

According to one view, the geographical distribution of the South Picene texts 'proves' the primitive unity of the people in these areas, and this primitive unity is the main element pulled out of the Sacred Spring myths. Once upon a time, according to this particular reconstruction, all the areas where South Picene texts have been found were inhabited by people who called themselves *safin-*, thus 'proving' the blood relationship implied by the Sacred Spring myths.⁶⁷ In fact, according to a few modern scholars, 'Safin-' inhabited also areas where South Picene texts have not been found, and in which Central Adriatic culture is not clearly represented, such as in the territory historically inhabited by the Marsi. This is argued by Grossi on the basis of a single element, a type of sword widely distributed in archaic

⁶⁵ For transcription of these texts, see Appendix A; for sketches of the monuments, see Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 325 ff.

⁶⁶ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno'; Prosdocimi, 'Sabinità'.

⁶⁷ See esp. Morandi, 'Iscrizione sabina arcaica'.

eastern Italy.⁶⁸ This indiscriminate use of the 'Safin-' label is alarming.

According to another view, the Sacred Spring myths are to be related to the time when this 'Safin-' unity 'disappears', when South Picene is 'replaced' by the 'minor dialects' of Osco-Umbrian languages. In its most simplistic form, the argument runs that, at this time, Osco-Umbrian speakers arrive in their individual areas in their Sacred Spring, supplanting the speakers of South Picene.⁶⁹ This particular theory relies heavily on the belief that there is a considerable gap—a real breach—between the latest South Picene texts and the earliest appearance of the minor dialects. This type of argument is by now familiar from the other examples of it cited above, and is built on the presumption that changes in culture- or language-systems can be equated with changes in personnel. It has obvious affinities with the phenomenon known familiarly to archaeologists interested in trade and settlement in the ancient Mediterranean as the 'pots-equal-people' fallacy.⁷⁰

3. QUESTIONING TRADITIONAL THEORIES

The arguments which I have outlined above all rely heavily on the identification of definite discontinuity in culture- or language-systems. In some cases, it may even be supposed that scholars set out deliberately to look for evidence of discontinuity and to find it at all costs, in order to support the conventional interpretation of the Sacred Spring myth as a dramatization of the invasion of eastern Italy by people culturally distinct from the indigenous inhabitants, and of the cultural/blood relationship between Sabines and other peoples of the Central Apennines, Samnites in particular. Much emphasis has therefore been placed on the identification of common cultural and linguistic elements shared between these peoples. Not so long ago, scholars concentrated on Varronian glosses of Sabinisms, and on reconstructing the process by which an original Indo-European ethnic became

⁶⁸ Grossi, *Il territorio*, esp. 89.

⁶⁹ See esp. Cianfarani, *Culture adriatiche*, 55 ff.

⁷⁰ For criticism of this approach, see La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 129–30; most recently, A. J. Graham, 'Pre-colonial Contacts: Questions and Problems', in Descoeudres, *Greek Colonists*, 45 ff., 50; cf. 58–9. For the assumed equation of language with people, see esp. Salmon, *Samnium*, 343–4.

represented in different periods and in different languages as Sabines, *safnim*, and Samnites.⁷¹ Lately, studies of archaeological material and of South Picene texts have played a much greater part in these studies. Very recently, however, doubts have been raised by a number of scholars about whether the archaeological and linguistic evidence can be used to support the hypothesis of cultural discontinuity in the Central Apennines, and also about whether the Sacred Spring myths must necessarily be interpreted in this literal fashion. Moreover, there is, in general, growing dissatisfaction with the use of invasion theories as explanation for cultural change. In addition, doubts have been raised about some of the primitive unities which have been popular in recent decades. The identification of culture- and language-systems such as Central Adriatic and South Picene are very suggestive in the context of early Greek perceptions of homogeneous masses, but they cannot necessarily be used to argue that the peoples themselves considered themselves to be part of a broad group, and privileged such affinity over their sense of membership to a smaller, more local group.

I shall now outline some of the main arguments against the traditional reading of the archaeological and linguistic evidence. There are, for a start, profound difficulties associated with demonstrating that Sabinum was the point from which the hypothetical invasion radiated outwards, at some time during the archaic period. The problem, which has been familiar for some time to those working on the origins of Rome, is that it is very hard indeed to identify distinctive cultural features of Sabinum during this period.⁷² Such features are quite remarkably few and far between. Given this difficulty, it would be unreasonable to expect that we could trace the hypothetical invasion of Sabine elements into the Central Apennines. The archaeological map—and, indeed, the geographical and historical map—of Sabinum is highly complex, and there are in fact several distinct, but interconnected, archaeological regions of Sabinum.⁷³ Considering only the broadest differences, one might begin by contrasting archaic tombs from Poggio Sommavilla with those from

⁷¹ See Salmon, *Samnium*, 321 n. 1: 'Varro (*L.L.* VII, 28) obviously thought that the Sabine and Samnite languages were related; and although he probably could not speak either tongue, he must have had some grounds for his opinion'.

⁷² See e.g. Poucet, *Les Origines*, e.g. 65 ff., 116 ff.

⁷³ See, in general, e.g. Cristofani Martelli, 'Poggio Sommavilla'; cf. Firmani, 'Panorama archeologico sabino'.

Terni, Santa Anatolia di Narco, and Monteleone di Spoleto. In general terms, tomb-types from 'Tiberine' Sabinum, *tombe a camera* apparently grouped together close to the inhabited centre, have closest affinities with those in the neighbouring Falisco-Capenate territory in the same period. One well-known example is represented by the burial complex at Poggio Sommavilla, which is used largely between the seventh and fourth centuries bc.⁷⁴ Tomb-types from parts of Sabinum further to the east, *tombe a fossa* in apparently isolated situations, such as those found at Terni, Santa Anatolia di Narco and Monteleone di Spoleto, have greater affinities with those from Picenum in the same period.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, similarly shaped pottery and similar painting repertoires can be identified within Sabinum and within Picenum.⁷⁶ However, we should be very wary about assuming that such evidence can be used to *confirm* the Sacred Spring myth, by 'proving' the 'common stock' of these areas. For one thing, the designs do not seem to originate in Tiberine Sabinum, but in the Faliscan and southern Etrurian areas.⁷⁷ For another thing, the manner in which the designs are developed from region to region makes an invasion hypothesis the least valid of the possible hypotheses. If invasion was the means by which these designs spread, we should expect a sudden and rather uniform change.⁷⁸ Moreover, once these ideas have come to Sabinum, their development is by no means confined to those areas associated with the Sacred Spring myths. They do not reach just Picenum, but Umbria and Romagna as well.⁷⁹ This kind of evidence is very interesting in that it suggests the importance of the Sabine territory as a kind of artistic conduit for parts of eastern Italy, but it certainly cannot 'prove' that the Sacred Spring myths are a simple description of a series of migrations from the Sabine territory.

At the other end of the hypothetical invasion route, Iron Age and archaic Samnium too are highly problematic for those seeking 'proof' of the Sacred Spring myths. Despite the valiant efforts of D'Agostino to scrutinize and patch together unpromising pieces of isolated information, some of which are now known only from the descriptions left by the nineteenth-century antiquarian of the region, De

⁷⁴ Cristofani Martelli, 'Poggio Sommavilla', 12–17.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 17.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 25–32 for *calici a corolla* cf. 42–6 for general conclusions regarding the artistic position of Poggio Sommavilla.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 26–7; 30–1.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 46 for caution regarding the relationship of the Sabines' Sacred Spring to the evidence from Poggio Sommavilla.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 29.

Nino, the picture of the area remains sketchy. It is, nevertheless, well worth noting D'Agostino's cautious conclusions regarding inland Molise. He tentatively suggests that we can 'catch a glimpse' of cultural 'provinces' within Pentrian Samnium during this period. He suggests that highland Molise, as represented by the sites of Capracotta and Carovilli, gravitates towards Central Adriatic culture, with some important local links with nearby Alfedena. Inland Pentrian Samnium gravitates rather towards the Volturnus valley and Campania.⁸⁰ This tendency towards regionality on a small scale is worth emphasizing, and, once again, raises serious questions about the hypothetical invasion, a foreign people sweeping through from Sabinum to Samnium.

Recent, careful linguistic studies of South Picene texts tell the same kind of story as do recent, careful archaeological studies of Iron Age and archaic material from the region. Just as Sabinum's cultural context is complex and confusing in the archaic period, so too is her linguistic context during the same period. As we have seen, Morandi emphasized homogeneity between, on the one hand, both the Poggio Sommavilla text and the Cures *cippus* and, on the other hand, South Picene texts from the eastern Adriatic region, not to mention texts from the Campanian region, without making clear the exact degree of linguistic similarity between them. In his desire to see—and interpret—links between all these areas, he made light of the difficulties associated with deciphering these texts, and did not allow for alternative interpretations of any similarities which can in fact be admitted between them.⁸¹ Fortunately, over the last decade, Marinetti and Prodocimi have both made various more sophisticated studies of these Sabine texts, and of South Picene and other, possibly linguistically related, texts. The conclusions of these studies challenge both Morandi's Sabine unity, and the Osco-Umbrian invasion theories favoured by other scholars.

As Prodocimi points out, alphabetically as well as culturally, there is more than one Sabinum.⁸² Morandi may be right to class the Cures *cippus* alphabetically together with the South Picene texts, but studies of the text are really at a too early stage to make a definitive classification of either its alphabetic or its linguistic context.⁸³ How-

⁸⁰ D'Agostino, *Sannio* (1980), 21 ff., 25.

⁸¹ Morandi, 'Iscrizione sabina arcaica'.

⁸² Prodocimi, 'I safini', 52.

⁸³ For caution regarding the Cures pillar, see *ibid.*, 51.

ever the Cures text turns out, there are signs of an entirely different alphabetic tradition in the Sabine area, as represented by a text from Poggio Sommavilla. It is, however, also well worth noting that studies of this text too are at a very early stage. Morandi's sweeping conclusions about this text's place in the identical language stretching from coast to coast have little basis at this stage. Marinetti, whom Morandi cites in his article, is very much more precise. Information relevant to arguments about the linguistic context of the Poggio Sommavilla text is as follows: final syncope in forms in -fs places it, she argues, within the broad linguistic group of 'Italic'; *two* alphabetic signs in the Poggio Sommavilla text suggest a common alphabetic model for this text and for South Picene.⁸⁴ This is very different from Morandi's suggestion that the language and alphabet of the Cures *cippus* and the South Picene texts are identical.⁸⁵ Marinetti's difficulties in classifying the language of the Poggio Sommavilla inscription are indicative of the depth of the problems associated with establishing its linguistic context. The alternatives she suggests are Sabine, Proto-sabine, and Italic.⁸⁶ As we do not yet know what Sabine was, and how it fits in with other languages of central Italy, the first two categories do not really take us very far. The third category, Italic, is, in this context, really too vague to be useful.⁸⁷

Moving further afield, *two* signs which occur in Capenate inscriptions used to be read as Etruscan signs, but make better sense if they are read as South Picene signs.⁸⁸ As for the 'Protocampanian' inscriptions of Nocera and Vico Equense eagerly fitted into Morandi's scheme, these may use *one* alphabetic sign which is *similar* to one used in South Picene texts.⁸⁹ Marinetti's cautious suggestions of linguistic links between the Protocampanian, Sabine, Capenate, and South Picene texts are tantalizing, but certainly cannot be used as 'proof' of 'common roots', or even of 'common culture' in any useful sense.⁹⁰

Nor can linguistic arguments be used to support the theory that the Sacred Spring myth is a simple description of the invasion of Osco-

⁸⁴ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 124.

⁸⁵ Morandi, 'Iscrizione sabina arcaica', esp. 602.

⁸⁶ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 123.

⁸⁷ For 'Italic' as a category, variously defined, see Pallottino, *Earliest Italy*, 3 ff.; cf. Salmon, *Samnium*, 33 and n. 4.

⁸⁸ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 124.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 125.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 128 for an extremely cautious conclusion, drawing attention to the very limited state of solid knowledge at the moment.

Umbrian speakers into an area inhabited by people who spoke some other 'indigenous' language, called Protosabellic by Devoto,⁹¹ and South Picene in more recent scholarship. In fact, both Marinetti and Prosdocimi have recently pointed to regional variations in dialect within South Picene which are precisely features which appear in the so-called 'minor dialects' (e.g. Marrucine, Vestine, Paelignian), when these first appear in the individual regions. The fact that this variation in dialects remains constant between the period of the South Picene dialects and that of the minor dialects means that the hypothetical invasion sweeping through the area is a most unlikely explanation for linguistic change.⁹² It cannot be denied that different cultural influences are apparent in this region by the time of the emergence of the 'minor dialects' in the fourth to third centuries BC: most strikingly, the 'minor dialects' are written in the Latin alphabet rather than in the South Picene alphabet.⁹³ However, Roman influence in eastern Italy, represented most clearly by the Samnite Wars, is a much more likely and obvious explanation for the spread of the Latin alphabet in this region than is an invasion of Sabines.⁹⁴ The continuity in variations in dialects within individual regions should discourage theories about the invasion of Osco-Umbrian elements, and new use of the Latin alphabet in this region suggests Roman, rather than specifically Sabine, influence.

Once again, it should be noted that historical Samnium lies well on the margins of South Picene, just as it lay on the margins of the archaeological Central Adriatic culture. In fact, the earliest Oscan text discovered to date is from the fourth century BC. Close links between the Sabine or South Picene areas are most unlikely in the development of written Oscan, as the alphabet used is modelled on the Etruscan alphabet. It is highly probable that this was filtered through the Campanian environment in the course of the fifth century BC.⁹⁵

4 THE FIFTH CENTURY SAFIN-

My task in the following two sections is to outline arguments against the indiscriminate use of the label 'Safin-', and to examine in detail

⁹¹ G. Devoto, *Gli antichi Italici* (Florence, 1967), e.g. 23.

⁹² Prosdocimi, 'La lingua', esp. 64-8. Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 125-6.

⁹³ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 126.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 127, for explanation of the new use of the Latin alphabet in terms of cultural and political choice gravitating towards Rome.

⁹⁵ Prosdocimi, 'La lingua', 66.

use of the label 'Samnite'. I have shown above that ideas about cultural homogeneity stretching over the areas of central Italy mentioned in Sacred Spring myths (and, in some cases, beyond these areas) should not be exaggerated. However, it is not yet clear whether broad similarities or regional differences would have been privileged by peoples living in this area. The relationship between cultural similarities and differences and ethnic identity is highly complex: cultural similarities are not necessarily proof of shared ethnic identity. The real problem is that, although one will expect to find shared ethnic identity accompanied by cultural similarities, the similarities privileged are culturally specific, and cannot always be observed 'objectively'. This complexity is demonstrated when an experiment is performed: archaeologists examine the cultural data of a contemporary people who can be questioned about their ethnic identity by social anthropologists. Even when hundreds of different cultural items are available for classification, the most that can be said is that there is a broad overlap between the ethnic categories assigned by archaeologists after classifying the material data, and the information which can be gathered about how the people classify themselves ethnically.⁹⁶ In comparison, the very small amount of material available to philologists and archaeologists for classification of peoples living in the Central Apennines two and a half thousand years ago, should caution us against over-optimistic assertions about their ethnicity based on this data alone.

When we have any kind of information about the names which people give themselves, these should, then, be privileged, as they may offer us important clues about ethnic boundaries. *safin-* appear in three texts dated to the fifth century BC: on two stelae from Penna Sant'Andrea, and on one from nearby Bellante, that is, in the historical area of Picenum.⁹⁷ These inscriptions represent a comparatively small proportion of the twenty-two inscriptions which can be assigned to the body of South Picene texts.⁹⁸ The only other appearances of *safin-* are (1) in a mid-second-century BC inscription from Pietrabbondante,⁹⁹ and (2) on coinage circulated during the

⁹⁶ Clarke, *Analytical Archaeology*, ch. 9, 'Group Ethnology', 358 ff.

⁹⁷ Coarelli and La Regina. *Abruzzo, Molise*, 325 ff., for sketches and transcriptions of the relevant inscriptions by La Regina.

⁹⁸ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 116.

⁹⁹ Ve. 149.

Social War.¹⁰⁰ If one does not feel constrained to include *Sabellus* in the package, it is quite an easy matter to reconstruct a common Indo-European form that would result in both *safin-* and the Latin form *Sabinus*.¹⁰¹ Including *Sabellus* causes great problems, but it is perfectly possible, and, I have suggested, probable, that this is a comparatively late Latin coinage, perhaps based on the diminutive form.¹⁰² The real question, however, is how extensive was the ethnic *safin-* at any one time.

For the fifth century BC the data is scarce. Archaeological evidence tells against an invasion, but cannot really be used alone to answer questions about ethnic identity. Evidence for the use of ethnic names is not plentiful. The only area from which we have any solid, contemporary evidence at all is a relatively restricted area of southern Picenum. There are six relevant inscriptions. The three *safin*-inscriptions are, as we have seen, all clustered around the neighbourhood of Penna Sant'Andrea. The three other relevant inscriptions all come from the area just to the north of Penna Sant'Andrea, two from historical Picenum, and one from the historical neighbouring Praetuttian territory. Within the latter texts, *púpún-* appears in formulas which correspond closely to the use of *safin-* further north. In one inscription, there is even the formula *púpúnis nír*, which corresponds exactly to *safinúm nerf* ('leading men of the *safin-*') in one of the Penna Sant'Andrea texts. The occurrence of these formulas, as well as the comparatively frequent appearance of the *púpún-* within this particular group of texts have led to the convincing suggestion that *púpún-* like *safin-*, is an ethnic rather than any other kind of name.¹⁰³ Its relationship to any historical ethnic is, however, very much less obvious than is the case for *safin-*, but this has not prevented scholars from linking it up with *Picentes*.¹⁰⁴

If two different ethnics are represented within a relatively restricted

¹⁰⁰ Sydenham, *The Roman Republican Coinage*, 89 ff. R. Cantilena, 'Problemi di emissione e di circolazione monetale', in *Sannio* (1984), 90, discusses two remarkable silver issues attributed to Samnium with the Greek legend *Saunitan/Saunion*. Whether these were produced by the Samnites themselves or by the Tarentines, it is tempting to set these issues within the fourth-century context of close connection between Samnites and Tarentines.

¹⁰¹ Marinetti, 'Il sudpiceno', 119 ff., for a version which is to be preferred to that of H. Rix, 'Sabini, Sabelli, Samnium: Ein Beitrag zur Lautgeschichte der Sprachen Altitaliens', *Beiträge zur Namensforschung* 8 (1957), 127 ff.

¹⁰² See ch. 2 s. 7 above.

¹⁰³ Prosdocimi, 'I safini', 49–50; La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 131–3.

¹⁰⁴ La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 132 for a note of caution.

area, as they do indeed seem to be, what conclusions can be drawn from this information? It reminds us at least that we are unlikely to be able always to make accurate judgements about ethnic identity from cultural and linguistic data alone. It also suggests that, in the fifth century at least, in some cases, local cultural diversity might be more relevant to questions about ethnic identity than are broad cultural similarities. It would, then, be most unwise to apply the 'safin-' label indiscriminately to the whole area represented by finds of South Picene texts, or of the Central Adriatic archaeological culture, let alone to any areas where any degree of influence by South Picene or Central Adriatic culture can be detected without further evidence.¹⁰⁵

There have recently been some interesting and sophisticated discussions of the possible historical and social contexts of the two groups of texts containing ethnics found in and, in one case, near to, southern Picenum, and these arguments are very relevant to questions about how ethnic identity is forged and strengthened. La Regina in particular points to the concentration within comparatively small areas of each group of texts. He suggests that this concentration is not due to an accident of survival, but demonstrates the assertion of an ethnic boundary; on one side, the stone monuments, apparently large grave-markers, with a rather crude, ovoid representation of a human head and a relatively long inscription referring to the individual, proclaim that this was a leader of the *púpún-* people, and on the other side, the monuments proclaim that this was a leader of the *safin-* people. The 'loudness' of this assertion—the build-up of texts on either side of the boundary—may suggest that these texts represent a new stage of self-differentiation in this particular area. La Regina points also to the recent discovery (1979) in northern Abruzzo of yet another suggestive fifth-century text. Its context, a bronze bracelet, is more puzzling than the grave-markers, but the text seems very relevant to this discussion. Within the twelve-word inscription, there appears the formula *ombriēn acren posticnam*. There are clear comparisons with the Iguvine tablets, which would suggest that *ombriēn acren* was a locative, equivalent to *in agro umbro*.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Grossi, *Il territorio*, 65 ff., for a strikingly indiscriminate use of the 'safin-' label.

¹⁰⁶ La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 131–3; cf. F. Barth, *Ethnic Group and Boundaries* (Boston, 1969).

Despite its curious setting, this text contains a clear reference to a sense of ethnic territory.

Recently, scholars have set these texts alongside accentuated cultural differences over the next couple of centuries, seeing the fifth century as representing the beginning of a very important period in increased ethnic differentiation and regroupings. The problem is that, even if they are right to suppose that the build-up of ethnic proclamations during the fifth century in this small area is significant, it is very hard to know what exactly it signifies: is one—or even both—of these names being asserted for the first time, or have the boundaries between them merely shifted? Some, like Torelli, assume that these texts signify the 'fragmentation of the *safin*-'¹⁰⁷ but the problem is that we know nothing about the whereabouts, or even the existence, of the '*safin*-' before this date.

Recent debate has, then, centred on the texts found in and around Penna Sant'Andrea, seeing in the fifth century the beginning of a process of fragmentation of the '*safin*-', out of which the historical tribes eventually emerge during the course of the fourth to third centuries BC. Modern scholars have emphasized the fact that regional cultural differences in the Central Apennines are greater than ever before in the fourth to third centuries BC. Linguistic evidence provides a vivid example of this increased differentiation. Both Marinetti and Prosdocimi have argued that regional differences are not to be ignored within South Picene texts, but they stress that, from the fourth to third century, differences are very much more pronounced. Most striking of all is the new alphabetic difference, the northern tribes now using the Latin alphabet, and the Samnites using the Oscan alphabet heavily influenced by the Etruscan alphabet.¹⁰⁸ Scholars argue that these more pronounced regional cultural differences are the articulation of new tribal awareness. This new tribal awareness, in contrast with the much greater cultural homogeneity of the period covered by Central Adriatic culture, is variously explained in terms of the supposed social and economic changes of the fourth to third centuries BC. The social effects of the circulation of luxury goods, power struggles, and the advent of literacy, are all seen as important instruments in this supposedly more precise articulation of tribal awareness.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Torelli, 'Le popolazioni dell'Italia antica', 66.

¹⁰⁸ Prosdocimi, 'La lingua', 66–7.

¹⁰⁹ See esp. Torelli, 'Le popolazioni dell'Italia antica', 62 ff.

This debate has been stimulating and exciting, but there are fundamental problems with the assumptions that lie behind it. Most importantly, it is too often assumed that, while the concept of 'safin-' is extensive, it predates any awareness of smaller identities.¹¹⁰ In other words, there are assumed to be no subgroups—such as Picentes or Curetes, for example—within the concept of 'safin-' before the fourth to third centuries BC. This is a complex issue, and resolving it requires that we understand what kind of a name 'safin-' is: later, it can function as an overarching name, within which individual tribes may be contained: rather more like 'Hellene' than 'Picentene', for example. Of course, we cannot know when exactly the historical tribes came into being: in most cases, epigraphic evidence for the names of historical tribes is comparatively late: beside these rare fifth century attestations, such as *umbro*, others date to the fourth to third centuries.¹¹¹ Despite the problems associated with understanding just how significant are these earliest pieces of evidence, it is tempting to think of some of these early attestations within the contexts both of apparent increased emphasis on self-definition and differentiation on a smaller scale, and subsequently of conflict with Rome. One hypothesis might be that conflict with Rome, like conflict with other peoples of central Italy previously, acted as a catalyst to accentuate and accelerate emphasis on possibly pre-existing smaller entities, such as Picentene, or Vestine, at the expense of the assertion of larger identities, such as 'safin-'.

5. WHEN IS A SAMNITE NOT A SAMNITE?

Who are these 'safin-', and who is a Samnite? There are a number of different ways in which such questions should be addressed. For one thing, we need to ask what sort of a name was 'safin-', or Samnite, and who was included under this name. Secondly, there is the related question of ways in which self-definition were expressed, often by reference to myths of origins. As we shall see, the issue is very complex, as the meaning of 'safin-/Samnite apparently shifts considerably within different political and social contexts.

¹¹⁰ e.g. *ibid.* 66.

¹¹¹ e.g. Ve. 228a = *CIL* i(2). 5 for a dedication *pro le[cio]nibus martses (pro legionibus Marsis)* of the late fourth century; Ve. 218 for the Rapino bronze of c.250 BC, a religious law concerning the *tota marouca*.

Considering first of all the fifth century 'safin-', it is tempting to take together the mid-fifth century inscriptions from Penna Sant'Andrea, and the easily reconstructed common Indo-European root for Latin Sabini, Samnium, and South Picene and Oscan *safnim*. I suggest that, at some time, the Sabines, Samnites, and people from at least a restricted area of southern Picenum called themselves, in some contexts at least, 'safin-'. This may have been a broad *nomen*, as 'Samnite' certainly seems to have been later, within which there were subgroups consisting of individual tribes and smaller groups, such as, for example, the Picentes, the Curetes of the Roman tradition, and perhaps the Pentri and Frentani within the 'Samnites'. These 'safin-' might have had a religious or political bond, like the Latins, but very little can be known about its arrangement; although the Penna Sant'Andrea inscriptions refer to individuals—*nerf*—and an institutional body, a *tuta*, suitable parallels for such institutions are not readily available. It is, for example, hard to know whether an Osco-Umbrian *touto* was exactly the same kind of institution.¹¹² Nor is it easy to know much about the social and political context for such an assertion of group identity, because of our lack of knowledge about central eastern Italy in the archaic period. The obscurity of the ethnic situation apparently asserted in the Bellante and Penna Sant'Andrea texts reminds us of quite how little we know about other relevant ethnic groups at this time. While the 'safin-' in these areas seem to have been distinguishing themselves, and were distinguished, from the neighbouring 'púpún-', were they elsewhere defining themselves in opposition to Etruscans, or Greeks?

Similarly, not much can be known for certain about why these 'safin-' no longer appear under a common name in the historical period. Nevertheless, the narrative of Roman expansion suggests that the Sabines—or, at least, some Sabines—were the first to be 'broken off' from the other 'safin-' and brought into a relationship with Rome, *Sabini* being nothing more than a Latinized form of 'safin-', and raising serious questions about the extent to which the *Sabini* had constituted an entity before the third century BC. It is more difficult to know when exactly this process began, but the tradition indicates that it was a long process, perhaps beginning with individual families in the archaic period, and culminating in the enfranchisement

¹¹² See e.g. La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 130–3 for a discussion of the concept of *touta* in Osco-Umbrian texts.

of 241 BC. The problem is that the Roman tradition tends to treat the Sabines as a block, and it is hard to know exactly which Sabines are being referred to in the context of the early history of Rome. The first Sabini with whom Rome came into contact would inevitably have been Tiberine Sabines. Traditionally, of course, Rome's relationship with Tiberine Sabines went back to the dual reign of Romulus and Titus Tatius,¹¹³ while the coming of known Sabine *gentes* to Rome was traced back to the early Republic, with the *gens Claudia*.¹¹⁴ Roman encounters with the more remote Sabines would have come later, in the course of the Samnite Wars.¹¹⁵ The strange detail about M'. Curius Dentatus conquering Sabines as far as the Adriatic coast in the early third century BC might, if it does not just derive from a late, exaggerated source, be a reference to the 'safin-' of the Penna Sant'Andrea inscriptions.¹¹⁶ At any rate, when, in the course of the third century BC, the Romans succeeded in driving a wedge of power across to the sea coast, the Sabines and Picentes were decisively separated from the Samnites.

Thinking now about the terms in which the 'safin-' defined themselves, I would suggest that some of the Sacred Spring myths are relevant to the fifth-century 'safin-'. To be sure, as I shall argue below, some of these myths, namely those concerning the Paeligni, Hirpini, and Mamertini, seem to be later variations on the theme of the Sacred Spring, in themselves interesting examples of the re-deployment of traditions, particularly in the case of the distinctive, and apparently culturally specific, Sacred Spring. Nevertheless, that leaves the traditions of the migration of the Samnites and the Picentes, both apparently from a Sabine epicentre.¹¹⁷ I would suggest that it is most unlikely that either is a Roman antiquarian invention:

¹¹³ e.g. Enn. *Ann.* 104 (Sk.), 'O Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti' ('O Titus Tatius, you tyrant, you brought such evils on yourself'); *Ann.* 98 (Sk.) for a possible reference to the rape of the Sabine women. Sabines are very important in Livy's account of the Regal period: see e.g. Numa 1. 18. 2-4; the rape of the Sabine women, 1. 9. 6.

¹¹⁴ Livy 2. 16. 4 ¹¹⁵ Musti, 'I due volti', 80-3.

¹¹⁶ Auct. *Vir. Ill.* 33. 1, 'Marcus [sic] Curius Dentatus primo de Samnitibus triumphavit, quos usque ad mare superum perpacavit.' ('Marcus Curius Dentatus first triumphed over the Samnites, whom he reduced all the way to the Upper [Adriatic] Sea.') The entire section is thought to be confused, and it is not clear that the author distinguishes clearly between Sabines and Samnites. See G. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, (Turin, 1907) ii. 365 n. 1.

The idea 'ad mare superum' may be nothing more than rhetorical hyperbole, although it is taken seriously by La Regina, 'Entità etniche', 131.

¹¹⁷ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C; 5. 4. 2 = 240 C; Pliny *NH* 3. 110.

the idea of the Sacred Spring with representative animals seems an oddly elaborate and strange way of inventing a tradition of collective origins.¹¹⁸ It would seem much more likely that such an invention would have been based on a more familiar type of myth of origins, such as individual eponymous heroes.¹¹⁹ Nor is there any obvious reason why anyone should have desired to dramatize connections specifically between Sabines, Samnites, and Picentes in the late Republic.

I would suggest that the most plausible setting for the assertion of Sacred Spring myths of origin of the Picentes and Samnites is the fifth to fourth century BC, and that these myths refer in some way to the extensive sense of 'sabin-' in the archaic period. I have argued above that it is most unlikely that these myths are literal descriptions of invasions, and that they are much more likely to be dramatizations of connections and/or separate identities. Further than this, it is hard to be precise about what these myths are dramatizing: is the emphasis more on connections between these peoples, and a collective identity, or is it rather on separate identities? If the emphasis is on a sense of collective identity, we might suppose that is an assertion of an identity distinct from 'pūpūn-', or Etruscan, or Greek, or even, particularly in the context of the fourth century, from Roman. If it is on separate identities that the emphasis lies, then we might suppose that these myths dramatize the assertion—or new emphasis on—tribal identities, perhaps at some point during the fourth century.

Thinking now of the 'Samnites', the name Samnium must have come to Rome by a route different from that of *Sabini*. For a start, it is likely that the Romans first encountered the Samnites at a date later than their first encounter with the Sabines. As we have seen, according to the narrative of Roman conquest, the Romans first encountered the Samnites in the mid-fourth century BC as a result of Roman successes in Latium;¹²⁰ war broke out when both were competing in the Middle Liris Valley. It has been suggested that the name *Samnium* came into Latin during the latter part of the fifth century,

¹¹⁸ Cf. Salmon, *Samnium*, 35.

¹¹⁹ Festus p. 436 L. has an alternative version, involving a named leader, Comius Castronius, and the localization of first Samnite settlement at Bovianum. This is surely a later version than that found in Strabo, reflecting the ascendancy of Bovianum amongst the Pentri.

¹²⁰ 354 BC: Livy 7. 19. 4, 'Res bello bene gestae ut Samnites quoque amicitiam peterent effecerunt' ('Success in warfare brought it about that the Samnites sought friendship').

perhaps through an Etruscan conduit after the extension of Samnite influence into Campania.¹²¹

Within Greek and Latin literary sources, definitions of a Samnite vary widely. Authors tend to write sweepingly about 'Samnites', more rarely mentioning individual tribes. At one end of the spectrum are the Samnites who apparently occupy an enormous area of central and southern Italy. While it is possible that early Greek authors at times use 'Samnites' interchangeably with other names, perhaps even of their own invention, to fill in the Italian landscape with an amorphous mass, some notices which have come through the Greek tradition remain tantalizing. In particular, there is Strabo's notice of the Tarentine invention of a Spartan ancestry for 'the Samnites'. They did this, Strabo says, to flatter powerful 'neighbours'.¹²² If one takes this literally, the Tarentines' neighbours are more obviously the Lucanians than the Samnites,¹²³ and it seems unlikely that the Tarentines would have chosen arbitrarily the name of the 'neighbours' they wanted to flatter. And indeed, within the whole tradition of the Spartan ancestry of various Italian peoples, Sabines, Samnites, and Lucanians are included.¹²⁴ For the Sabines and Samnites, a common Indo-European root for the names can be argued suggestively easily, but might the Lucanians also at some time have called themselves, or have been willing to be called, 'Samnites'?

At the other end of the spectrum, there is a very much narrower definition of 'Samnite'. Within Livy's account of the 'Samnite' Wars, the Romans' major opponents are the Pentri, Caudini, and Hirpini.¹²⁵ But, more extremely, when ancient authors refer to the insurgents in the Social War, and the peoples of the Central Apennines subsequently, it can sometimes be seen that, through a process of elimination, 'Samnites' are only the Pentri. Other tribes, such as Hirpini and Frentani, let alone Lucani, are mentioned separately.¹²⁶ It is surely no accident that, in the ancient sources as a whole, of the Hirpini,

¹²¹ La Regina, *Sannio* (1980), 29. ¹²² Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C.

¹²³ See Musti, 'La nozione storica', 74-5.

¹²⁴ Sabines: Cato, *Orig.* 2. 22 (Chass. cf. Ch. 2, s. 4 above). Lucani educating their boys Spartan-style: Justin 23. 1. 7-10.

¹²⁵ Salmon, *Samnium*, 42 n. 1. The Carriceni (see Coarelli and La Regina, *Abruzzo, Molise*, 161 for this, the correct Latin form) were apparently absorbed by other Samnite tribes after the Pyrrhic war: Salmon, *Samnium*, 44. Polyb. 2. 24 for Samnites in the line-up against Hannibal in 225. Walbank, *Polybius*, i. (1957) ad loc. on the inclusion of Hirpini at least, as well as, presumably, Pentri and Frentani within these 'Samnites'.

¹²⁶ Appian *BC* 1. 39. 175; cf. Salmon, *Samnium*, 343.

Frentani and Pentri, the Pentri are mentioned by far the least frequently: 'Samnites' had come to be synonymous with the Pentri.¹²⁷

Greek usage of the term *Saunitai* varies. Lucanians, like Bruttians, are treated separately in Greek literature of a comparatively early date,¹²⁸ and even the mid-fourth-century author of the *Periplus* treats Lucani and Campani separately from Samnites.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, as we have seen, 'Samnites' can, in Greek sources, occupy a very large area of central and southern Italy. But did Lucanians and even Bruttians ever think of themselves as 'Samnites'?¹³⁰ I have argued above that Strabo's report of the Tarentine fiction of Spartan ancestry might imply that Lucanians at least allowed themselves to be called Samnites at this time. The only other evidence which is relevant to this question is that of myths and accounts of origins. As Musti has shown, Strabo's account has a neat gradation of relationships. The 'inner core' is the Sacred Spring involving Sabines, Samnites, and Picentes. The Frentani are *saunitikon ethnos* ('a Samnitic people'), but are nevertheless listed separately. The Lucani are the *apoikoi* ('colonists') from the Samnites, and the Samnites are their *archegetai* ('founders'). Finally, the Bruttians are themselves *apoikoi* from the Lucani. Musti suggests that the idea of *apoikia* reflects a Greek attempt to make sense of relationships between Lucani, Bruttians and Samnites, by referring to the practice of colonization which was such a familiar feature in their own history of expansion.¹³¹ This might be the case, but, even if it is, it still leaves open the question of what kind of relationship the Greeks were trying to account for. It is possible that the Samnites, Lucanians, and Bruttians themselves dramatized their present, fourth-century, relationship through the assertion of common origins, and these too might have been envisaged as a graduated series of relationships. A possible parallel might be found in the history of the Achaean League. Here, there were 'original' Achaeans, but the name could be, and indeed was, extended, along with the political relationship which the name signified.¹³² The Lucanians too, it would seem, could, when acting

¹²⁷ See Ch. 5, s. 5.

¹²⁸ See e.g. Aristophanes fr. 629 Kock ap. Steph. Byz. s.v. *Brettios*; Lucanians: Lycophron *Alex.* 1083–6; Leonidas Tarentinus *Anth. Pal.* 6. 129, 131.

¹²⁹ Salmon, *Samnium*, 40.

¹³⁰ From the early 3rd cent. bc, both Lucanians and Bruttians are issuing coins which bear their ethnic. For Bruttians, see *BMC Italy*, 319–33 nn. 1–118; for Lucanians, see *BMC Italy*, 224–5 nn. 1–6.

¹³² Polyb. 2. 37 ff.

¹³¹ Musti, 'La nozione storica', 71–3.

together with the more northerly tribes, such as the Pentri and Hirpini, have allowed themselves to be called 'Samnites'. And grouping the Lucanians together with the other 'Samnites' could have appeared to Greeks and Romans either desirable or not desirable in various circumstances. It may not be accidental that the biggest hint that the Lucanians were in some sense 'Samnites' comes to us via Tarentum. It would surely be in the interest of the Tarentines around 327 bc to emphasize strongly the broadest possible connections between themselves and peoples of central and southern Italy, and amongst these Italian peoples themselves. If they could build upon a sense of connected origins which reached broadly from the Sabines to the Bruttians, then so much the better.

Roman interests in the fourth to third centuries bc are likely to have been very different from those of the Tarentines around 327 bc.¹³³ And it is surely the Roman presence which was ultimately responsible for the gradual whittling away of the name of 'sabin-'. In some cases, it could seem advantageous to an individual tribe to side with the Romans against the other 'sabin-', as seems to be the case with the Frentani during the Samnite Wars.¹³⁴ But more decisive action on the part of the Romans was apparently needed to drive a wedge between the Hirpini, Caudini, and Pentri, with the sending out of the Latin colonies of Beneventum (268) and Aesernia (263). Nevertheless, in the line-up against the Gauls in 225 bc, it looks as if Polybius includes Hirpini amongst the *Saunitai*, even though he later treats these as a separate people.¹³⁵ But by the mid-

¹³³ Musti, 'La nozione storica', for an interesting discussion of the differences between Greek and Roman portrayals, with emphasis on 'dividing and conquering' on the Roman side.

¹³⁴ Frentane valour on the Roman side during these wars was notorious: Plut. *Pyrrh.* 16. 10. The general history of the Frentani is very complex. In the late fourth century, the Frentani made a treaty of alliance with the Romans. From the last few years of the fourth century bc, Larinum used a separate coinage from the other Frentani, and becomes Latinized, in contrast with the other Frentani, who are Oscan-speaking right up to the Social War. See La Regina, 'Aspetti istituzionali', 178. Subsequently, the Frentani are invariably grouped with the Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, and Marrucini: see e.g. Polyb. 2. 24. 12, which is surely indicative of their distance from the other Samnite tribes after the end of the fourth century bc.

¹³⁵ For 'Samnites' in the line-up in 225, see Polyb. 2. 24, with Salmon, *Samnium*, 294 n. 5 for the inclusion of the Hirpini. For Hirpini treated separately after this, see e.g. Polyb. 2. 91. 9.

For the beginnings of a wedge between Pentri and Hirpini, see Salmon, *Samnium*, 200; cf. Musti, 'La nozione storica', 81; A. La Regina, 'L'elogio di Scipione Barbato', *DDA* 2 (1968), 173 ff., esp. 182; Salmon, 'The Hirpini: *ex Italia semper aliquid novi*', *Phoenix*. 43 (1989), 225 ff., 226-7.

second century BC, apparently only the Pentri were referring to themselves, and being referred to, as 'safin-'.

The subsequent history of the Pentri is ironic. They were the only Samnite tribe that did not side with Hannibal, and it may be that they were subsequently enabled to flourish at the expense of other tribes in the region. At any rate, by the late second century BC, they were building a monumental theatre-temple complex at Pietrabbondante, which was clearly a new and improved central sanctuary and meeting-point for all the second century 'safin-', the Pentri.¹³⁶ Perhaps the Hannibalic War was a turning-point for the history of the name 'safin-' itself: it may not be a coincidence that Polybius apparently believes that Hirpini and Pentri enter the war as Samnites, but that afterwards the Hirpini are decisively broken off. Perhaps the Pentri used the new prestige which they achieved by being the only tribe loyal to Rome throughout the conflict to advertise themselves as *the* 'safin-' after the war, to the exclusion of other tribes. One result of visible Roman presence in the Central Apennines after the Samnite Wars may have been the accentuation of rivalries and differences which already existed between the individual tribes. As for the Hirpini, I would suggest that they chose at some point during the third or even second century BC to dramatize their newly found closeness to Rome by asserting that the *hirpus* ('wolf') which allegedly gave them their name was really the Romulean wolf.¹³⁷

In 91 BC, however, the prestige of the Pentri was being used in a novel way, as Papius Mutilus, *embratur* of the southern allies in the Social War was clearly Pentrian. Seven coins—a very small percentage of those coined by the insurgent allies during the Social War—carried the name *safnim* alongside the name of Papius Mutilus. These coins surely referred only to the Pentri themselves, and such a small proportion cannot possibly have been intended to invoke the older, broader, sense of *safnim*.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ La Regina, 'Il Sannio', esp. 229. La Regina, *Sannio* (1980), 29 ff. for the character of Pietrabbondante as common sanctuary of all remaining *safin*- i.e. the Pentri during the 2nd cent. BC.

¹³⁷ Salmon, 'The Hirpini', 225, 234–5 suggests that the Hirpini had a tradition of Romulus and the wolf which was separate from that of Rome. It seems unlikely that this shared tradition is a mere coincidence, and Salmon may be overly concerned here with the desire to demonstrate the anti-Roman tradition of the Hirpini.

¹³⁸ Sydenham, *The Roman Republican Coinage*, 89 ff. Of coins minted during the Social War, only one out of the total thirty-four types, seven out of the 198 known individual coins discovered bear the legend *safnim*. cf. La Regina, *Sannio* (1980), 29 ff. for the restriction of *safnim* to the Pentri from the 2nd cent. BC. Prosdocimi, 'I safini',

Myths of origins concerning the Samnites might be seen as eloquent expressions of ways in which they saw themselves, and their place in the world. For example, on one reading, the myth related by Servius, according to which Diomedes founded a number of Samnite cities, would be no more than the projection of a Hellenocentric world-view onto the Samnites. Alternatively, it is easy to see the potential offered to the Samnites themselves by such a myth, connecting them closely with desirable values of the Greek world, and in fact hard to resist the conclusion that the Samnites were well aware of the value of such a myth. Similarly, as we have seen above, it is not unlikely that the Samnites were aware of the 'Tarentine version' of their origins, and able to exploit it to their advantage.¹³⁹

As we have seen, it is likely that the 'Sacred Spring' myths concerning the origins of the Samnites and Picentes are expressions about identity dating from the fifth to fourth centuries BC. It is very interesting that Alfius' version of the origins of the Mamertini, quoted above, reiterates and redeploys themes of the 'Sacred Spring'. This version is very positive: the expedition of the Mamertini is given divine sanction, and, in return for services rendered to the Messanians, they are invited to share their community.¹⁴⁰ The better known version of events is found in Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus: the Mamertini were mercenaries enlisted by Agathocles, who seized Messina on his death in the 280s.¹⁴¹ Alfius' account most plausibly dates to the late third or early second century BC, and the fact that he has an Oscan name is surely significant. The expedition is called a Sacred Spring, and, like the Strabonian version of the origins of the Samnites themselves, involves the motif of the 'incomplete' dedication which excludes men, followed by the dedication of the men in order to complete the vow properly. Mars, the god elsewhere associated with Sacred Springs, also plays a part in this tradition concerning the Mamertini, although he is not the god to whom the expedition is dedicated. While such features serve to recall the Strabonian version of the origins of the Samnites, certain features of Alfius' account of the Mamertini recall different traditions. Above all,

44, asserts that even non-Samnite Italic peoples chose for themselves the name 'safin-' in the course of the Social War. This view cannot be supported by any of the available ancient evidence.

¹³⁹ Servius *Ad Verg. Aen.* 8. 9; cf. Ch. 1, s. 3 above.

¹⁴⁰ Festus p. 150 L. s.v. Mamertini; cf. Ch. 5, s. 1(b) above.

¹⁴¹ Polyb. 1. 7. 3; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 15. 5.

certain features are reminiscent of the colonization tradition of Rhegium, within which the Chalcidians, struck by a plague, dedicate one man in ten to Apollo. These men are sent to Delphi, and subsequently to colonize Rhegium on the instructions of the Delphic oracle. These latter reminiscences are unlikely to be accidental.¹⁴²

Associating Apollo closely with the Mamertine Sacred Spring ties this tale neatly into Greek colonization traditions, appeals to ideas of Apollo as protector of Hellenism, and also surely refers to the special relationship between the Greek cities of Sicily and Apollo, as does the Mamertines' later emphasis on his cult.¹⁴³ At the same time, however, Alfius' version does not merely reproduce a Greek-style foundation story: self-consciously Greek elements are woven into a tradition that refers us back to an 'indigenous' version of the origins of the Samnites themselves. Once again, reference to Greek motifs is entirely culturally specific.

6. THE IDEOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL WAR

Although divided into two groups, the rebels nevertheless possessed a certain degree of ethnic community. They all belonged, or at one time had belonged, to the same linguistic family, and both Q. Poppaedi Silo, the 'Marsic' leader, and C. Papius Mutilus, his 'Samnite' counterpart, bear unmistakably Sabellian names. Thus the war was not without its nationalist aspect.¹⁴⁴

Salmon's analysis of the 'nationalist' aspect of the Social War is extremely problematic. He insists on using a category—Sabellian—for which there is no evidence until after the Social War, a category which was very probably coined by the Romans, and which, moreover, is never used to refer to the more northerly insurgent peoples such as the Marsi, Paeligni, and Picentes. If such a category was important to the insurgent allies at the time of the Social War, it is strange that they did not advertise it on their coins.

Salmon also considers as relevant to his argument the fact that the insurgent allies belonged, or had belonged, to 'the same linguistic family'. In fact, on this point, his book as a whole is extremely confused. Elsewhere, he asserts that, 'If Samnites, Lucani and Bruttii failed to form a political union, it may have been due in large part to

¹⁴² Cf. Heurgon, *Trois études sur le 'Ver Sacrum'*, Collection Latomus 26 (Brussels, 1957), 20 ff.

¹⁴³ Cf. Intro. to Ch. 2, above.

¹⁴⁴ Salmon, *Samnum*, 344.

differing racial strains. The common language (whose dialectal variations were really quite minor) should not be taken as proof of ethnic identity'.¹⁴⁵ Salmon suggests that language is a determining factor in ethnic identity when he sees peoples of central and southern Italy acting together, and then asserts that it is not a determining factor when he has to explain why the Lucanians and Samnites are frequently found on opposite sides. The idea that people's actions and affinities are determined by their racial make-up is the product of racist ideology of the modern period, rather than a useful analytical tool for considering the past,¹⁴⁶ and the implication that a common language is necessarily the cause of a sense of affinities and common actions is not helpful, and would put great difficulties in the way of understanding the history of the peoples of ancient Italy. If Salmon is right when he is arguing that language is a determining factor, one would have to wonder why the Marsi, Paeligni, and Marrucini did not apparently feel greater affinity with the Umbrians than with the Samnites, and one would be very hard pushed to explain the actions of Capua. Language is not a determining factor in notions of ethnicity; a perception of sharing a language may be used to strengthen a feeling of affinity, but a common language is not a necessary factor of such a feeling.¹⁴⁷

It is, then, essential when examining the ideology of the Social War, to consider in first place the not inconsiderable evidence of how the allies themselves asserted their common aims. Amongst the very large number of coins issued during the Social War, by far the most common slogan is *Italia*. In contrast, only one out of the total thirty-four types, seven out of the 198 known individual coins of the allies discovered bear the legend *safinim*. Furthermore, *Italia* more usually appears in Latin, although a minority of coin-types have the legend in Oscan, and one, doubtful, issue has a bilingual legend. On coins bearing this legend, a bull is often depicted, sometimes recumbent, and sometimes, in the most famous type, trampling on the wolf of Rome.¹⁴⁸ A recumbent bull also appears on coins with the slogan

¹⁴⁵ Salmon, *Samnium*, 95.

¹⁴⁶ Patterson, 'Context and Choice', esp. 305–6 for discussion, and criticism, of the idea that ethnic identity is involuntary and not changeable.

¹⁴⁷ Banton, *Racial Consciousness*, 2–3, for the difficulties in deciding by what criterion or criteria a group has been constructed, and for the different criteria which may be important in any particular social context.

¹⁴⁸ Sydenham, *The Roman Republican Coinage*, 89 ff., no. 628.

safnim: on this type, it lies by the side of a soldier who stands with his foot on a Roman standard. Italia, or Italica, also appears as the name of the last capital of the allies, Corfinium transformed.¹⁴⁹

What can these images tell us? First of all, they suggest that Italia was felt to be a more effective rallying cry for the allies than was *safnim*, which would have referred only to one tribe—the Pentri—at this date. Secondly, they suggest that language was of limited importance in rallying the allies as a whole. If the allies were really held together by a language that all had—or had had—in common, or even if language had taken on strongly ‘nationalist’ overtones as in modern Wales or Brittany,¹⁵⁰ one might expect at least more coins of the bilingual type, if not more coins with the legends in Oscan exclusively. Instead, the different languages used in coin legends are rather to be explained by the different languages in common use within the insurgent areas. Broadly speaking, tribes to the north, such as the Picentes, Marsi, and Marrucini, would have been used to public documentation in dialectal Latin for a long time, while, in the south, amongst the Pentri, Frentani, and Lucani, Oscan was the norm until after the Social War.¹⁵¹

What did *Italia/viteliu* mean to the allies when they fought the Social War? While there is a long history of conceptualizations of Italy in Greek and southern Italian thought, shifting to reflect different ideologies, it was ultimately to Roman ideology that the allies owed their concept of Italia in its geographically extensive form.¹⁵² The recurrent image of the bull on allied coinage bearing the name of Italia, and, for that matter, of Safnim, nevertheless offers clues that the allies’ Italia had alternative overtones, and appealed to other traditions. Most striking of all is the coin-type that bears the image of the bull against the wolf of Rome: the Romanness of Italia was surely not uppermost in the allies’ minds.

I would suggest that the bull had a number of possible meanings, which are not mutually exclusive. It might recall the story attributed to Hellanicus of Lesbos, where the land wandered by Herakles’

¹⁴⁹ Diod. 37, 24 ff., Strabo 5. 4. 2 = 241 C for Italica; cf. sling bullets with the name *itali*, Salmon, *Samnium*, 345 n. 3.

¹⁵⁰ See McDonald, ‘We Are Not French!’, for an interesting study of the place of language amongst modern ‘Celtic’ separatists.

¹⁵¹ Sydenham, *The Roman Republican Coinage*, 89.

¹⁵² Brunt, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, 113–14; Gabba, ‘Il problema dell’“unità”’.

ouitoulos, conveniently loose in terms both of geography and ethnic distinctions, becomes *ouitelia*.¹⁵³ Then again, it might be the bull followed by the Samnites when they arrived in their Sacred Spring. Reminiscences of the Sacred Spring myths seem altogether likely in the context of the ideology of the Social War, particularly in view of the fact that according to Sisenna, the allies seem to have declared a Sacred Spring in the course of the action, a Sacred Spring that Sisenna certainly refers back to its 'original' Sabine roots:

Quondam Sabini feruntur vovisse, si res communis melioribus locis constisset, se ver sacrum facturos.

The Sabines are said to have vowed once upon a time that, if their situation improved, they would dedicate a Sacred Spring.¹⁵⁴

There is, moreover, reason to suppose that bulls were of continued importance to the Samnites: studies of the bones of sacrificial victims at Pietrabbondante, the common shrine of the second century 'Safin-', the Pentri, are beginning to show the importance of bulls within this particular sacrificial ritual.¹⁵⁵ One might see here further contexts in which the Sacred Spring version of Samnite origins was evoked and related to a cult of importance in historical times.

It seems possible that the symbol of the bull on allied coinage might also serve to evoke perceived connections between Samnites and other peoples, connections positively sought after as the allies joined the common cause against Rome. I suggested above that a fifth century version of the Sacred Spring myth probably referred only to Sabines, Samnites, and Picentes. Despite this restricted membership, however, the symbol of the bull might have evoked connections between Picentes and Samnites, recalling as it did the Sacred Springs which linked them in common ancestry. If the Samnites 'kept alive' the myth of the Sacred Spring by reinventing it with regard to the Mamertini, and, just possibly, through sacrificial ritual at Pietrabbondante, it is not impossible that the Picentes too had 'kept alive' on their own part the myth of the Sacred Spring, suiting the needs of their own society. One might well wonder too whether this was the point at which assertions were made about the origins of additional peoples in the form of a Sacred Spring sent out by the Sabines. It is in this

¹⁵³ Hellanicus *FGH* iv, F 111 = D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 1. 35.

¹⁵⁴ Sisenna fr. 99, 100 P.

¹⁵⁵ Strabo 5. 4. 12 = 250 C; Barker, 'Animals, Ritual and Power'.

context that Ovid's allusive reference to the Paeligni and their Sabine forebears becomes suggestive. In contrast with the versions concerning the Picentes and the Samnites, this tradition seems rather bare: there is no explicit reference either to a Sacred Spring, or to an animal leader, suggesting the likelihood that connections between Sabines and Paeligni was a 'secondary' ideological development. In view of Ovid's interest elsewhere in a version of the Social War in which the allies sought *libertas*, one might suppose that Ovid would be particularly interesting in relating 'local' traditions that stressed their non-Roman character. Was it the Social War that provoked the assertion of such a tradition, linking the Paeligni in closely with the Samnites?¹⁵⁶

CONCLUSION

Modern scholars have all too often posed questions about the ethnic identity of the peoples of the Central Apennines in terms of nineteenth-century theories of race. In their identification and discussion of primitive unities, they have assumed that the actions of peoples who lived hundreds of years after the periods covered by these supposed primitive unities were more or less determined by this pre-existing cultural unity. They have been frequently misled by the ancients themselves, who regularly expressed present relationships in terms of blood ties. I have argued that notions of identity are far from fixed and 'objective', and that questions of identity must be posed in such a way as to allow for the possibility of frequent regroupings according to individual circumstances. Combined action can be accompanied by assertions of common roots and culture, but common roots and culture do not automatically determine action. The categories used by outsiders will also shift, according to what is perceived to be advantageous to any one of these outside groups at any one time. Sometimes these categories will have overlapped, or coincided, with the image being projected by members of the inside group. Sometimes the images will have clashed. I would argue that one of the most significant cases of overlap occurs during, and in the decades following, the Social War. During the Social War, it was in the interests of the insurgent allies to emphasize their links through assertion of myths of common origins, and even through supplying

¹⁵⁶ Ovid, *Fasti* 3. 95-6.

new details. By the Late Republic and Early Empire, when an anti-Rome was increasingly sought in Roman ideology, the ideology of the allies themselves during the Social War surely helped to form the foundations of this emergent Roman Italian ideology in which all these peoples could be grouped together. Most strikingly, when the Samnites no longer constituted a threat to Rome after the actions of Sulla in the 80s BC, the Romans invented a name—Sabelli—which realigned their supposed Sabine ancestors with the very much remoter Samnites, the latter being referred to in their broadest sense. The great irony is that it is most likely to have been the Roman presence which had severed the links between Sabines and Samnites, and between the individual Samnite tribes, in the first place.



Epilogue

Of the Italic peoples the Samnites are the ones who appear prominently in every account of Roman expansion in Italy. Indeed they have inspired some of Livy's finest writing and have evoked generous tribute from him; largely, I suspect, because the period of their greatness was for him *aetas qua nulla virtutum feracior fuit*, the heroic age of Rome. Yet no attempt has ever been made to describe these fiercest opponents of Rome from their own point of view.¹

How should we write the history of ancient peoples who had no literature of their own, and what should it mean to describe such a society 'from their own point of view'? This question is of increasing importance at the moment, as there is growing interest in such societies, partly due to advances in the study of material culture particularly in the period after the Second World War, and partly, it would seem, as the result of contemporary disillusionment with large nation-states and centres of empire. If we are to escape Finley's scathing criticism of 'regional histories', and are to avoid writing in an indiscriminate manner 'all we know' about a region or city,² one thing is clear: we need to select and frame our material with the help of a more sophisticated methodological approach. In particular, it is well worth considering further how we should conceptualize relationships between societies which had no literary tradition and Greek and Roman societies which did have such a tradition.

In this book, a high level of interaction and interdependence—cultural, economic, political, and ideological—between the various peoples of peninsular Italy has been emphasized throughout. This emphasis on interaction inevitably raises doubts about the conventional understanding of such processes as 'Hellenization' and 'Roma-

¹ Salmon, *Samnium*, p. ix.

² M. Finley, 'How it Really Was', *Ancient History: Evidence and Models* (London, 1985), 47 ff.

nization'. It is no longer acceptable to conceptualize the processes of cultural interaction that we think of as 'Hellenization' and 'Romanization' as involving passivity on the part of a 'native' society that gives in to the 'natural' superiority of Greek/Roman culture, adopting it blindly and in an uncreative manner. The study of 'Hellenization' or 'Romanization' in a region can no longer consist of merely cataloguing artistic or political influences, but should address questions of local social contexts. It is time to stop conceptualizing Greek and Roman influences as necessarily being in opposition to regional culture, and to consider ways in which individual ancient societies made use of a variety of cultural influences in order to express themselves in a unique fashion. Recent archaeological advances have set the material evidence from the Central Apennines squarely within the context of cultural interchange in peninsular Italy. The Pentrian Samnites in the second century BC, for example, clearly made conscious use of precise architectural models from the Hellenistic world. On these models they based their monumental rural sanctuaries which functioned as 'central places' within Samnium, expressions of a society in which a distinctly non-urban mentality was predominant. Such a mentality was very different from the urban ideal of contemporary Greco-Roman society.

The use of precise architectural models from the Hellenistic world is one manifestation of a sophisticated cultural consciousness. Similar sophistication is apparent in Alfius' version of the arrival of the Mamertini in Messana: a Sacred Spring according to Samnite tradition, but guided not by Mars, the god usually associated with Sacred Springs, but by Apollo, a god associated with civilization as defined by Greeks. Here is a myth of origins within which tradition has been reinvented to reflect contemporary consciousness of cultural identity: we may also see clear signs of both the desire and the means to appeal to Greek sentiment on the part of the supporters of the Mamertini. If we want to write about the Samnites, or any other Italian people that had no literature of their own 'from their own point of view', it is essential to admit the cultural complexity of such societies, rather than to attempt to isolate 'regional', 'Hellenized' and 'Romanized' features.

When we consider the literary sources, portrayals of 'other peoples' in Greek and Latin literature should clearly not be used in an indiscriminate fashion in the context of 'writing all we know' about a region or city. Nor should they be considered at face value, as

objects to be 'put to the test' by archaeology, perpetuating a traditional opposition between the literary sources and the material culture of a region. Such literary portrayals are obviously always in some sense reflections of the frames of reference of the society in which they were written. Nevertheless, it is clear also that such portrayals are frequently also reflections of relationships that are more complex and interesting than one in which Society A is supposed to have projected images of its choice onto a blank screen, Society B. Within the Greek world, expressions of cultural chauvinism, particularly acute when Greek identity was perceived to be under threat, should not be considered to exclude close interaction with other peoples. It should remain a possibility that what we think of ultimately as 'Greek' traditions, such as those surrounding the Caudine Pontius Herennius, are in fact the reflections of a shared ideological tradition that arose out of close contact between Greeks and Samnites. Given the undeniable material evidence of close interaction between the Samnites and the Greek world, it is surely better to keep this possibility open than to assume that the Samnites were a passive group that periodically figured unwittingly in Greek fantasies.

Roman literary portrayals of Italians are peculiarly complex. By the later second century bc, images of barbarians, worthily indigenous upholders of ancestral custom, subjects and kinsmen coincide in uneasy tension, tension that reflects attempts to conceptualize a complex and sometimes ambivalent relationship. In the case of peoples of the Central Apennines, facets of their relationship with Rome before their incorporation into the citizenship included a long history of enmity, the provision of large manpower resources on which Rome relied to fight foreign enemies, and ties of hospitality between local and Roman élites. After their incorporation into the citizenship, they retained a position that was to some extent ambivalent: their 'outsider' quality could be idealized and exploited once they were safely incorporated, and at a time when their own cultural distinctiveness was considerably diminished. The degree and quality of the 'mismatch' at the intersection between the ideology of the local societies and that of Roman society is complex and interesting, reflecting such a multi-faceted relationship. Roman images are relatively informed, focusing on certain aspects of local society which were apparently important in local ideology, always viewed through the intellectual frameworks of Roman society.

Against the background of a comparative abundance of material

evidence for local societies in ancient Italy, and an increasingly sophisticated treatment of literary sources regarding 'other peoples', it is time to ask questions about how both types of evidence can be used together. It has been with such questions that I have been concerned while writing this book.

APPENDIX A

Occurrences of the Name *Safin-*

1. THE PENNA SANT'ANDREA (TERAMO) TEXTS

(a) TE 5 (A. Marinetti, *Le iscrizioni sudpicene I: testi* (Florence, 1985), 215–17)

šidom : safinús : estuf : ešelsít : tšom : po /
vaisis : pidaitúpas : fitiasom : múf qlúm : me
[[n/t]] fištrúf : nemúnef : praistáit : panivú :
meitims : saf/inas : tútas : treḡegies : titúf :
praistaklasa : posmúi

(b) TE 6 (Marinetti, *Iscrizioni sudpicene*, 218)

]ṇis : safinúm/ : nerf : pe/rsukant : p[

(c) TE 7 (Marinetti, *Iscrizioni sudpicene* 220–3): the relevant lines only are given here, as there is dispute regarding the sequence of the remainder of the text.

]rtúr : brfmeqlúf : alfníom : okref : safina[/
]nips : tóuta : tefef : p/osmúi : praistafnt : a[

2. A MID-SECOND CENTURY TEXT FROM PIETRABBONDANTE (Ve. 149)

[p]úrtam. lífs - - - - (-) / - - - ḡ safinim. sak - - - - - (-)/
- - upam. fak. úfn - - - - - (-)/ [fn]fm. keenstur - - - - - (-) /(5)
[m]afiefs. maraiefes. - - - - - (-)/[p]aam. essuf. úmbṇ - - - - - (-)/
avt. pústiris. esidy - - - - - (-)/ ḡuunated. ffs[nai - - - - (-)]/
[f]nfm. leḡuss. samíp [- - - - fnfm] / (10) - úvfrfkúnúss. fff . . .

3. ALLIED COINAGE OF THE SOCIAL WAR (Ve. 200 G 2; cf. Sydenham, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 89 ff.)

g. mutfl (R) safinim.

APPENDIX B

Uses of the Ethnic *Sabellus* in Latin and Greek

1. VARRO

fr. 17 (Astbury) = Servius Auct. *Ad Georg.* 2 168

de Sabellis Varro in *Age modo* sic ait:
terra culturae causa attributa olim particulatim
hominibus, ut Etruria Tuscis, Samnium Sabellis.

2. HORACE

(a) *Sat.* 2. 1. 34–9

sequor hunc, Lucanus an Apulus, anceps:
nam Venusinus arat finem sub utrumque colonus,
missus ad hoc pulsus, vetus est ut fama, Sabellis,
quo ne per vacuum Romano incurreret hostis,
sive quod Apula gens, seu quod Lucania bellum
incuteret violenta.

(b) *Sat.* 1. 9. 29–30

namque instat fatum mihi triste, Sabella
quod puero cecinit divina mota anus urna:
hunc neque dira venena, nec hosticus auferet ensis,
nec laterum dolor aut tussis, nec tarda podagra:
garrulus hunc quando consumet cumque. loquaces,
si sapiat, vitet, simul atque adoleverit aetas.

(c) *Epodes* 17. 27–29

ergo negatum vincor ut credam miser
Sabella pectus increpare carmina,
caputque Marsa dissilire nenia.

(d) *Epist.* 1. 16. 49

'sum bonus et frugi renuit negitatque Sabellus.'

(e) *Odes* 3. 6. 37–41

sed rusticorum mascula militum
proles, Sabellis docta ligonibus
versare glaebas et severae
matris ad arbitrium recisos
portare fustis'.

3. LIVY

(a) 8. 1. 7

alteri consuli Aemilio ingresso Sabellum agrum non castra Samnitium, non legiones usquam oppositae.

(b) 10. 19. 20

ibi interventu Gelli cohortium Sabellarum paulisper recrudit pugna.

4. VIRGIL

(a) *Georg.* 2. 167-9

haec genus acre virum, Marsos pubemque Sabellam
adsuetumque malo Ligurem Volscosque verutos
extulit.

(b) *Aen.* 7. 665

veruque Sabello.

(c) *Aen.* 8. 510-11:

natum exhortarer, ni mixtus matre Sabella
hinc partem patriae traheret.

5. STRABO

5. 4. 12 = 250 C

εἰκὸς δὲ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ Σαβέλλους αὐτοὺς ὑποκοριστικῶς ἀπὸ τῶν γονέων προσαγορευθῆναι, Σαμνίτας δ' ἀπ' ἑλλης αἰτίας, οὓς οἱ Ἕλληνες Σαυνίτας λέγουσι.

6. PLINY

NH 3. 107

Samnitium quos Sabellos et Graeci Saunitas dixere.

7. JUVENAL

Sat. 3. 168-70

fictilibus cenare pudet, quod turpe negabis
translatus subito ad Marsos mensamque Sabellam
contentusque illic veneto duroque cucullo.

8. MARTIAL

(a) 4. 46

Saturnalia divitem Sabellum
fecerunt: merito tumet Sabellus,
nec quemquam putat esse praedicatque
inter cauidicos beatiorem.
hos fastus animosque dat Sabello
farris semodius fabaeque fresae

[the list of cheap gifts continues]

Saturnalia fructosiora
annis non habuit decem Sabellus.

(b) 7. 85

quod non insulse scribis tetrasticha quaedam,
disticha quod belle pauca, Sabelle, facis,
laudo nec admiror; facile est epigrammata belle
scribere, sed librum scribere difficile est.

(c) 9. 19

laudas balnea versibus trecentis
cenantis bene Pontici, Sabelle.
vis cenare, Sabelle, non lavari.

(d) 12. 39

odi te quia bellus es, Sabelle.
res est putida, bellus et Sabellus;
bellum denique malo quam Sabellum.
tabescas utinam, Sabelle, belle!

(e) 12. 43. 1-4

facundos mihi de libidinis
legisti nimium, Sabelle, versus,
quales nec Didymi sciunt puellae
nec molles Elephantidos libelli.

(f) 12. 60. 7-8

natali pallere suo, ne calda Sabello
desit;

9. SILIUS ITALICUS

4. 219–21

trahit undique lectum
divitis Ausoniae iuvenem, Marsosque Coramque
Laurentumque decus iaculatoremque Sabellum.

10. USE OF SABELLUS OR SABELLIUS AS *COGNOMEN* OR
GENTILICIUM

(a) Earliest known use: Livy 41. 4. 6 (in the context of the Histrian War of 178 BC):

ante omnes insignis opera fuit C. Popili equitis; Sabello cognomen erat.

(b) For other uses, see W. Schulze, 'Zur Geschichte lateinischer Eigennamen', *Abhandlungen der Königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen: philologisch-historische Klasse*, ns 5 (Berlin, 1904); and H. Solin and O. Salomies (eds.), *Repertorium nominum gentilium et cognominum Latinorum* (Hildesheim, 1988).

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